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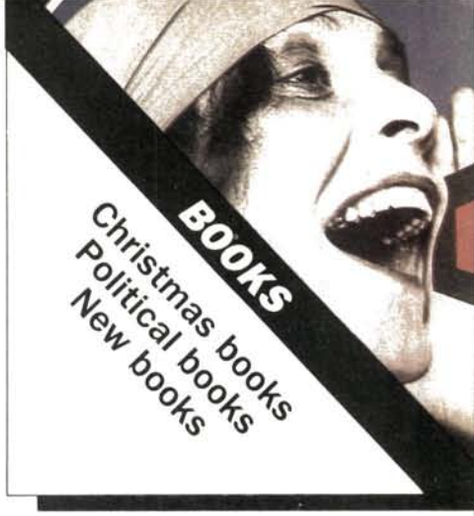

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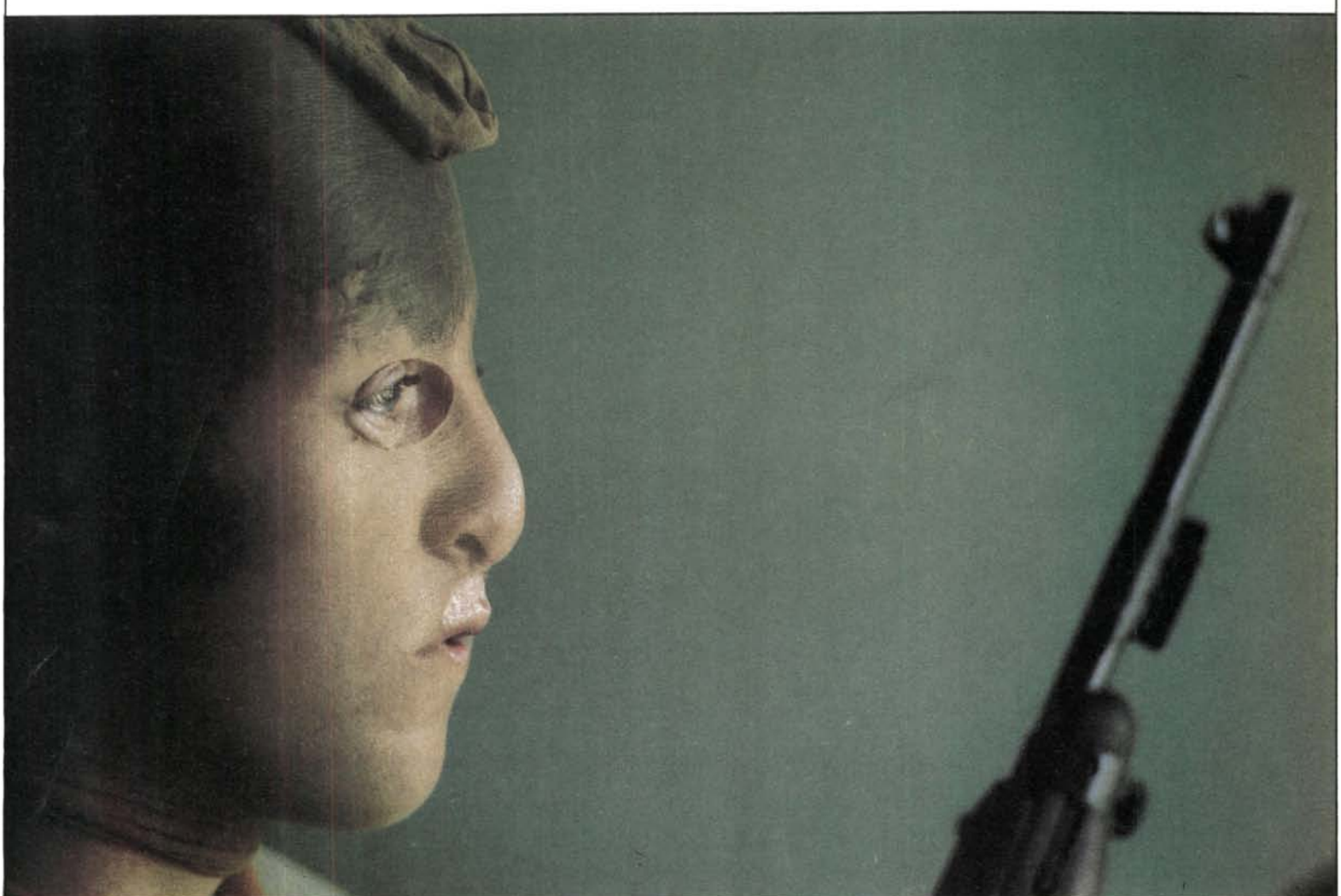

'The greatest hope the terrorists harbour . . . is to disorient the American people . . . to disrupt or alter our foreign policy'

Ronald Reagan, July 9, 1985

Photo: Rex Features

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"ART seems to me to be the most universal religion of our time, and the artist its principal messenger. The artist is a witness of his time, but he can also be an accuser, a critic, or he can celebrate in his works the uneasy greatness of his day ....."

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NEW STATESMAN

Vol 112 No 2905 28 November 1986

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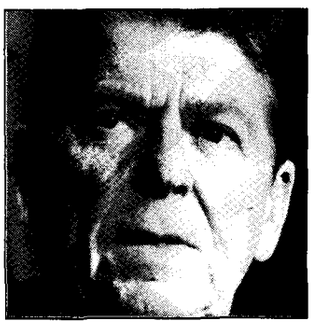
NEXT WEEK

The 'No Platform Issue' in universities has seen far right and far left locked in combat: it has also split the left. We talk to those who would deny platforms — and those who have been denied them.

And now — Reagangate?



EVEN MRS THATCHER has had to distance herself: 'I don't, yet, speak for America' she told the Commons. 'Moral leadership' is what she in open tandem with President Reagan has offered in 'the fight against socialism' here, the 'fight against communism' there. Now the regime of her prop and ally is in tatters even in the eyes of the American electorate with the revelations of arms deals with Iran and slush funds to provide the Nicaraguan Contras with weapons Congress had refused.

Reagan has attempted a damage limitation exercise. He may excape direct blame only because American pride couldn't stand a second Republican president being proved a liar.

On page 6 we publish an article by Amir Taheri, editor of the Paris-based *Jeune Afrique* in which he details the operations of Iran's Holy Terror, responsible for more than 700 documented terrorist attacks in which 400 American and French citizens have died in the last four years. But America's supply of arms to Iran, a state which Reagan had dubbed 'outlaw' for its sponsorship of terrorism, 'was barely out of line with other western states', says Taheri.

'All of them have similarly fulminated against the sponsorship of terrorism and yet, for the past two years at least, most have been courting . . . Tehran.' That courtship, in the case of Mrs Thatcher, has included securing the goodwill of the mullahs by allowing them to use London as the main centre for their arms procurement activities on the international scene.

One faction in the Holy Terror network insists that the West understands nothing but the language of terror and must be blackmailed into meeting Iran's need for arms. Reagan's attempts to win favour from the mullahs by arms deals will have strengthened the hand of that faction, so that the incentive for seizing more western hostages and launching more attacks on western interests in the Middle East is today at its highest for five years. □

Elimination of socialism

THE PRIME MINISTER, in her interview with the *Financial Times* last Wednesday, asked for two more terms of a Conservative government in order to 'get rid of socialism as a second force' in the land.

Her policies have shown that a Conservative government is willing to cause and maintain unemployment and relative poverty at levels never, since the war, regarded as tolerable. That has not swung the country to socialism: but in those areas where this visitation of human misery and sense of uselessness is worst — in Scotland, the North East, the North West, the Midlands, South Wales — the votes for the Conservative Party are not abundant. In Scotland, a bad result for the Tory party in the next election could mean it would be hard pressed to find a sufficient complement of ministers for the Scottish Office (five) if the populous and wealthy south again ensures a Tory government. It will take many, many terms of Toryism to stamp out socialism in these areas: as long as it takes to stamp out their people, perhaps.

Her (unspoken) parallel here is with the United States, where two parties vye with each other for power and for their devotion to the free market. But it is a misleading model: socialism of any kind was never able to establish itself in the US, in spite of some brave tries. It was never able to take the leap from being a movement of protest to being one of power, from seeing society in part to having to govern it as a whole. Labour, like most other West European socialist parties, has had that experience, and its democratic institutional roots run deep.

Here is what she told the *FT*:

> If people could be sure that we would never have another socialist government, increasing control of the state, increasing control of ownership . . . then I think the prospects for this country would be really bright . . . the history of democracy is the history of increasing liberty from the power of the state.

This shows her the right-wing radical still: still umbilically attached to the equation, popularised by Milton Friedman, that free markets equal a free people. Well, socialists believe that people should be free, too: believe that they have a better track record in ensuring they have more of that freedom: and further believe that they will continue to do so by not believing tha he power of the stae is a uniformly malign force. □

Proud of a prizewinner

CONGRATULATIONS TO Julian Barnes, Deputy Literary Editor of the *NS* from 1977-1979, whose *Flaubert's Parrot* has just been awarded one of the prestigious French Prix Médicis. The French not being quite like ourselves, the novel's been awarded the 'best essays' prize (stickers defiantly proclaiming *'essais'* are even now being rushed to French bookshops to slap across the word *'roman'* on the cover) but at least the award must be some consolation for Barnes's exclusion, with *Staring at the Sun*, from this year's British Booker shortlist. □

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War exercise under way

MANCHESTER AIRPORT and Liverpool docks were badly damaged by bombing this week. Water supplies to both Manchester and Merseyside have also completely broken down. Troops may soon have to go in to restore order in the Lake District, which has been inundated by refugees fleeing the crisis in Liverpool. And there's a desperate shortage of drugs to deal with the mounting casualty toll in North-western hospitals. The bombing and other disasters are part of the opening scenario in the first war and home defence exercise that the government has dared to organise since 1980. But 'Nuclear free zone' local authorities in the area, like Manchester itself, have not been invited to take part.

The details we have obtained about the emergencies the exercise will cover have been kept secret by Home Office officials. Even MPs will only be allowed to know a little of what has been going on once it's all over. A limited account of the exercise is then to be placed in the House of Commons Library. The exercise is intended to test a new system of crisis government which, for the first time, merges official strike-breaking preparations with military war planning. Until two years ago, the two systems were quite separate.

The government Regional Emergency Committee (REC) system was last used by the last Labour government in the transport strike. It originally dates back to the 1926 General Strike. A similar but separate regional Home Defence system was set up during the Second World War; two bunker headquarters have been provided since then from which each regional government can operate after attack.

But a revamp of the Home Defence system ordered by Mrs Thatcher in 1979 has resulted in extensive changes to these plans. Now, from very early in an international crisis, the government will set up RECs to control war preparations and mobilisation. The RECs will be based in nine English cities, as well as in Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast. The cities include London, Birmingham, Manchester, Newcastle, Leeds, Nottingham and Bristol.

Only the North-western REC is in operation this week, acting as a Whitehall in miniature, and governing Merseyside, Lancashire, Greater Manchester, Cheshire, and Cumbria. The REC's 'cabinet room' is a conference room in a government tower block in central Manchester, the Bernard Sunley building. In the exercise, emergency powers laws are assumed to have been passed by parliament, enabling the officials to take over property and supplies, and to direct labour.

A small team of senior civil servants from the Home Office and Department of the Environment has been preparing plans for the exercise for the past two years.

This exercise will not 'go nuclear'. But military mobilisation is to be presumed, with many American troops landing in the area. Department of Employment officials will therefore be expected to produce labour battalions, conscripted from locals in the area, to help move military supplies and equipment. Hospitals are to be cleared for US and British military casualties from Europe; and drugs supplies will run out.

In the Lake District, the hotel trade is closed down. So the Department of the Environment team on the REC have to consider how to deal with the resulting battles over food and shelter. Since there are no solutions to these problems other than bullets or starvation, its unlikely that we'll be hearing how they dealt with the exodus to the Lakes. This and other 'sensitive' problems will be excised from the documents that MPs will be allowed to see.

Duncan Campbell

Hatton gives notice

IT WOULD appear that the NEC have finally caught up with Hatton, although his Rasputin-like ability to survive any form of political assault doesn't rule out a revival. He has only given notice of resignation, and on prevous form there's every chance of his doing a hasty de Gaulle and returning from his brief exile because of popular demand. The demand from him for a thousand pounds for a TV interview, however, went unmet.

The purpose of his resignation as deputy leader of Liverpool Council was a last minute attempt to stave off disciplinary action against Tony Byrne who took over as leader last week and who has been supporting Hatton. Many Labour officers and NEC members have wanted to get the non-Militant finance chair for some time. Several councillors who publically deplored the expulsions of Hatton and Co. were privately disappointed that Byrne wasn't included. Some Labour leaders thought they had got Byrne earlier this year when they discovered he hadn't paid any membership dues for several years. He managed to obtain a card from another, more sympathetic ward. But his dethronement of John Hamilton, as leader, may prove the final moral straw.

Coincidentally, Monday saw the Runnymede Trust's launch of a book, *The Racial Politics of Militant in Liverpool*, which is as timely as only a book foreworded by a bishop and an archbishop can be. It traces the sorry tale of race relations in Liverpool, through the Sampson Bond Affair, as extensively reported in the *NS* of the time, to now. It refers to the 'Municipal Stalinism' operated by the triumvirate of Hatton, Mulhearn — and Byrne, whose intransigence towards housing co-operatives, voluntary bodies, and the Black Caucus has made so many enemies for the Labour Party.

Ian Williams

'Whitehall has failed the country; that is the tragedy for Britain. The farce is the way that Whitehall actually governs its affairs'

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PETER KELLNER

When democratic socialists must come off the fence

LAST WEEK I reported on a new Fabian pamphlet* that posed some tough questions for democratic socialists. In essence, the dilemma boils down to this: does 'democratic socialism' have a distinct vision of its own, or must it choose between two kinds of revisionism: modifying state socialism or modifying capitalism?

Few people believe any longer that a totally planned economy controlled from the centre is capable of operating efficiently, humanely or without corruption. In as far as the debate about democratic socialism concerns the exercise of economic power, two questions follow: what *should* the state control?; and, is there a 'democratic socialist' way of operating the rest of the economy?

In view of the government's privatisation programme, the first question has the greater topical significance. The Conservatives are busy removing vast boulders from the commanding heights of the public traded sector and hurling them into the arms of shareholders. British Telecom, Britoil and Sealink have gone; British Gas and British Airways are going; the water boards and the rest of BP are next in line, and last week Mrs Thatcher told the *Financial Times* of her ambition to sell off the coal, steel and electricity industries.

If all that happens, will British Rail and the Post Office be far behind? After five more years of Conservative rule, especially if Mrs Thatcher remains Prime Minister, state control of the economy will be confined largely to the non-traded sector: schools, hospitals, the police, defence and whatever remains local about local government.

We could argue endlessly, and doubtless many will, about which privatised companies a truly socialist government would renationalise. As a rule of thumb, my preference would be to have utilities and natural monopolies under public control.

Let us leave this line-drawing exercise, however, and concentrate on the second and, frankly, more important issue. In any feasible and electorally acceptable socialist society, much of the economy will *not* be controlled by the state or local government. The hard test for democratic socialists is what they — we — have to say about this.

IN THE FABIAN pamphlet, David Miller and Saul Estrin address this point. They examine the concept that, for many, provides the solution: the notion that enterprises operating in the market should be owned and controlled not by capitalists but by their own workers. Miller and Estrin cite a number of advantages:

> Power is spread throughout the enterprise, with each member formally having equal voting rights, and a chance to share in managerial functions . . . Since each member has a stake in the profit of the enterprise, there are likely to be substantial gains in productive efficiency. Finally, the distribution of income, although it must to some extent reflect the market position of those with specialist skills, is likely to be considerably more egalitarian than in . . . alternative forms of enterprise.

Having set out the stall, Miller and Estrin immediately inspect its wares. They are not impressed by what they see. The kernel of their argument is this:

> The capitalist system is highly responsive to changes in market conditions from both the cost and demand side, whereas co-operatives are interested in the collective welfare of their members . . . The moral is surely that the co-operative form may be inappropriate if we want to exploit social opportunities in sectors with rapidly changing demand, technological or cost conditions. In good times co-operatives will not adapt sufficiently to high demand or technological changes. In bad times, co-operatives are ill-suited to the hard decisions involved in fundamental capital and labour restructuring.

It is worth pausing a moment to absorb the enormity of that proposition. If the evidence on which it is based is accepted, then a large part of the foundations of 'third way' democratic socialism — between capitalism and state socialism — crumble to dust.

In a closed economy, we might accept the social benefits of co-operative economic organisation in preference to some of the material benefits of technologically-responsive capitalism. If the only cars available were made by BL, and only Triumph motor bikes were on sale, British civilisation would clearly survive, although at the price of savagely diminishing consumer choice.

'Can the final victory for socialists only come about when capitalism is defeated and legislated out of existence?'

We live, however, in an open economy. People are free to buy Japanese videos, American computers and Far Eastern textiles. We are also increasingly offered 'British' made goods produced, or partly produced, in this country by multinationals. That means that the trade-off between lower-tech democratic producer co-operatives and high-tech capitalist enterprises is not, in fact, sustainable. Democratic socialism in a market economy must provide for a system of financial investment, labour recruitment and product and service innovation that at least equals what capitalism can offer.

IN ANOTHER of the essays in *Market Socialism*, David Winter offers one convincing way out of this hole. His answer is neither to require Whitehall to control industry, nor for ICI to be turned into a worker co-operative. He takes a leaf from what pro-capitalist governments do. They rig the rules — Companies Acts, the tax system, trade union laws and so on — to give their friends various legal and financial advantages. Then, 'the government sits back to view the results. Additional intervention may be necessary from time-to-time, but not on a day-to-day basis'.

A democratic socialist government could do the same. As Winter says,

> The implication here for a socialist government is that if it wants to change the nature of capitalist companies, one potentially attractive strategy is to amend the Companies Acts, not to nationalise or do anything else to particular companies or industries . . .
>
> Choices should be left to the decisions of the various participants involved. Thus the market socialist government sets up the framework of laws and institutions that enable different forms of economic organisation spontaneously to evolve in an advantageous way.

Here we reach the crux of the issue. Socialism is seen by all of its critics and some of its advocates as a compulsory, tightly controlled system of economic organisation. In as far as 'socialism' is seen as an alternative to 'capitalism', the final victory for socialists can only come about when capitalism is defeated and, presumably, legislated out of existence.

Instead, we have an opportunity to develop democratic socialism in an organic and voluntary way. Neal Ascherson made the point in last Sunday's *Observer* that many people (including right-wingers) come together naturally to engage in collective action, whether in churches, sports clubs, 'leagues for this or that, societies for every conceivable serious or frivolous purpose', pressure groups and even political parties. The strength of collective association lies in its voluntary nature. A choral society that is drawn from musical enthusiasts is likely to sing infinitely better than one that is assembled by coercion.

Democratic socialism has an opportunity to cut with the grain of human emotion and ambition: to use government power where public good manifestly requires national or local government decision, but otherwise to encourage a diversity of forms of economic organisation to evolve. Use the law, certainly, to create rules that curb excessive power and wealth in the hands of the few; use the tax system to tilt the balance in favour of co-operative forms of production — but otherwise leave people to make their own voluntary transactions, whether as workers, savers or consumers.

At the beginning of this article I asked: must democratic socialists choose between two kinds of revisionism — modifying state socialism or modifying capitalism? Yes they must; and there is no point in hiding in semantic evasion. The project for democratic socialists is to modify capitalism. □

**Market Socialism: whose choice?*, £1.50 from the Fabian Society, 11 Dartmouth Street, London SW1H 9BN.

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The fruits of terror

Rex Features

The sponsorship and perpetration of terrorist acts have one overriding virtue for their backers and authors — they work. In the report on Iran below,* AMIR TAHERI *unravels the 'network of Holy Terror' while on p.8* R. W. JOHNSON *analyses a phenomenon which appears resistant to reform or retribution alike.
***Boxes by* PATRICK FORBES**

THE SUPPLY of arms to Iran, a state which President Reagan had dubbed 'outlaw' less than 18 months ago for its sponsorship of terrorism, has weakened the US presidency more than any other act. But the US was barely out of line with other western states. All of them have similarly fulminated against the sponsorship of terrorism — and yet, for the past two years at least, most have been courting the revolutionary mullahs of Tehran. In Britain's case, this has meant turning a blind eye to Tehran's use of London as a centre for arms procurement, for propaganda and for the sponsorship of terror.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's Islamic government demonstrated its ability to inflict humiliation on the 'cross worshipping enemies of Islam' when he approved the seizure of the US embassy in Tehran in 1979. When Ronald Reagan succeeded Carter in 1981, the mullahs ordered a temporary halt to revolutionary action against 'the great Satan', as Khomeini calls the US. Reagan was seen as a tough leader who would not accept the kind of ignominy Carter had suffered to keep the hostages alive and eventually win their release.

It was not until late in 1982 that the mullahs decided to put Reagan's 'macho' image to the test by ordering a series of bomb attacks on American-owned buildings in Kuwait and the Emirate of Qatar. Reagan's reaction proved surprisingly mild, and the mullahs decided to go further. By the end of 1982 they had created a veritable network of 'Holy Terror' under the enigmatic Ayatollah Fazl-Allah Mahalati, whose official title is 'The Representative of the Imam in the Revolutionary Guard'. (The 'Imam' or 'The Supreme Guide' is the title Khomeini chose for himself in 1978 when he launched his revolutionary movement against the Shah.)

Reagan's strengthening of Washington's military presence in the Persian Gulf and the consequent threat to Iran's oil-exports, meant that the Ayatollah had to find another terrain on which to fight the 'great Satan'.

That terrain was found in war-torn Lebanon, where Mahalati, spending tens of millions of pounds, succeeded in creating the Hizb-Allah (the party of Allah) with the help of a group of militant shi'ite Muslims. By mid-1983 the Tehran-sponsored network of 'Holy Terror' was a force to reckon with in the Lebanon. It had at its disposal dozens of 'Enteharis' — those who are 'ready to die while killing the enemies of Allah'. An entire squadron consisted of young women, aged 16 to 20, who had been designated as 'Arous Addamm' or 'Brides of Blood'. They were trained in driving truckloads of dynamite into enemy positions, killing and dying in the process.

In November 1983 the soldiers of 'Holy Terror' struck in Lebanon, blowing up the dormitories of American marines and French paratroopers. The double suicide attack cost the lives of 241 American servicemen and 59 French soldiers. The explosion caused by the attackers at the American soldiers' dormitory has since been described by experts as 'the biggest non-nuclear explosion the world has known since World War II'.

Both Reagan and the French President Francois Mitterrand reacted by promising an exemplary punishment for the terrorists. But they did not go beyond a number of largely symbolic raids on villages inhabited by shi-ites in the Bekaa valley and both subsequently withdrew their forces from Lebanon. However, the humiliation inflicted on Reagan went largely unnoticed inside the United States.

Israel and the mullahs

There is strong evidence that, following the suicide attack, Israel played a key role in persuading the Reagan Administration to start a dialogue with the mullahs. The Israelis had wasted no time in understanding the advantages that the presence of the party of Allah in Lebanon could bring them. The shi'ites were sworn enemies of the Palestinians who are, in turn, considered by the

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Israelis as the worst enemies of the Jewish State. At the same time, the party of Allah and its patron saints in Tehran seemed determined to prevent President Hafez El-Assad of Syria from achieving his dream of dominating Lebanon.

Two men ran the network of 'Holy Terror' in Lebanon on behalf of Khomeini. One was Ayatollah Ali-Akbar Mohatashami whose official title was 'Ambassador of the Islamic Republic to Damascus'; the other was Muhammad Nourani, a graduate of the University of San José in California who served as chargé d'affaires in Beirut. They recruited a number of Lebanese shi'ite militants on the spot, among them Hussein Moussawi. Moussawi, a former teacher of Chemistry at Baalbek College, was picked by Nourani as the leader of the Islamic Amal (Hope) organisation which served as the political arm of the 'Holy Terror'.

Since then the network of 'Holy Terror' has been responsible for more than 700 documented terrorist attacks. Most of these have been against Iraq, at war with Iran since 22 September 1980. But a number of western countries, notably the United States and France, have figured among prime targets. A total of 400 American and French citizens are estimated to have died in various operations conducted by the 'Holy Terror' during the past four years.

Scores of Americans and French people have been held as hostages by the partisans of Allah for varying lengths of time in the same period. At least one American hostage, William Buckley, and one French one, Michel Seurat, have almost certainly been murdered by the 'Holy Terror' while in captivity. The network of 'Holy Terror' also takes credit for the murder of some 20 of the CIA's highest-ranking agents in the Middle East during the 1983 suicide raid on the US embassy in Beirut.

In creating his network, Ayatollah Khomeini has made use of an ancient Islamic tradition whereby the 'Elimination of the enemies of the faith' is an individual task incumbent on every true believer. To 'enforce the good and prevent the evil' is a sacred duty for all Muslims: thus the use of violence in the performance of this duty has been long accepted. Three out of four immediate successors of the prophet Muhammad, who were known as 'The Well-guided Caliphs', were assassinated by fanatics who believed they had violated the rules of the Qur'an. During the Crusades, the sect created by Hassan Sabbah in the mountains of Rudbar, northwest of present-day Tehran, spread terror in the Christian as well as the Muslim camps. These 'Agents of Allah's Will', as they like to be called, came to be known as the 'Assassins' because they were accused of taking hashish.

The assassination of unloved rulers and the physical elimination of 'enemies of Islam' have never been challenged in principle, even by the most learned of Islamic theologians. The prophet himself is quoted as saying that the believers should 'kill the trouble-makers before they can make trouble'. Those whose removal is considered essential for the sake of preserving Islam or ensuring its further expansion are given the title of Mahdur Ad-Damm or 'Those Whose Blood Must Go To Waste'. To assassinate them is to carry out the will of Allah for which one is rewarded by gaining a secure place in paradise.

During the past four years the Islamic Republic has trained several thousand young men and women for participation in acts of terror, ranging from individual assassinations to the hijacking of civilian aircraft and the blowing up of installations belonging to 'enemies of Allah'. Inside Iran, at least 22 'training centres', including four for women, have been established. But the 'Holy Terror' network also maintains half a dozen such centres in Lebanon. Most recruits are young radicals from Iraq, Lebanon, Bahrain, Kuwait and Morocco. There are also Pakistanis, Filipinos and Indian Muslims. Some members of the 'Holy Terror' network have been recruited from among Muslim students attending British and American universities.

The network is spending an average of £4m a year in Britain alone on propaganda and recruitment. The sum in question is channelled through an Iranian bank in the City and a British Bank in the Island of Jersey.

'Revolutionary Justice'

The network of 'Holy Terror' is organised in a variety of separate and semi-autonomous groups. Often they use the code name of 'Islamic Jihad', or Holy War, in order to sign their actions. Another favourite code-name is that of 'Revolutionary Justice Organisation'.

Each group may have a total membership of between 20 and 150. Liaison among the various groups is assured only through the Islamic Revolutionary Guards stationed in Lebanon since 1982.

THE FUTURE of the network of 'Holy Terror' has been one of the key issues in the power struggle that has been going on in Tehran for the past three years: the failing health of Ayatollah Khomeini, now 84, has intensified the struggle. Some mullahs want the activities of 'Holy Terror' curbed so that the Islamic Republic can normalise its relations with the West — a normalistion deemed vital in view of the fact that Iran's oil revenues have steadily fallen since 1984, while the ongoing war with Iraq means that the Islamic Republic must somehow procure the necessary arms. Another faction, however, insists that the West understands nothing but the language of terror, and that the western powers must be *blackmailed into meeting* Iran's needs for arms and spare parts.

The faction supporting 'normalisation' with the West is led by the speaker of the Islamic Majlis (Parliament), Hojat Al-Islam Ali-Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, who has been negotiating with the United States, as well as Britian and France, through a number of intermediaries — including some prominent international arms merchants. Israel has also given a helping hand: the Israelis are anxious to help Iran with the Gulf War and bring down the regime of the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, in the hope that the event would be sufficient to keep the Arabs divided and confused for long enough for Israel to bring them to the negotiating table, one by one.

Negotiations between the Reagan Administration and Rafsanjani's faction were initiated by David Kimche, the former director-general of the Israeli foreign ministry — culminating in Robert McFarlane's two trips to Tehran.

The fact that the United States was obliged to ignore the arms embargo it had imposed against Iran, however, is seen by the radical faction in Tehran as a sure sign that 'the great Satan' would only respond to violence and terror. The radicals, led by the prosecutor-general Hojat Al-Islam Muhammad Khoiniha, eventually leaked the news of the secret negotiations forcing both Tehran and Washington to announce a halt in their contacts. But there is every indication that a majority of the mullahs and their allies want the process of normalisation to continue.

It is now established that even the Islamic prime minister, Mir-Hossein Mussavi, has been involved in the secret talks with Washington. This is important, because it shows that the process initiated by Israel now enjoys much broader support in Tehran than it does in Washington.

Meanwhile, France continues its own 'normalisation' with Iran. It will return the $1bn loan it received from the Iranians while the Shah was still in power. As for Britain, Mrs Thatcher has secured the goodwill of the mullahs by allowing them to use London as the main centre for their arms procurement activities on the international scene. A new Islamic chargé d'affaires is due in London soon and Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Foreign Secretary, has already given the go-ahead for the reopening of the British Embassy in Tehran.

The western powers, including Israel, avoid in their discussions with the mullahs any mention of the future of the network of 'Holy Terror'. They hope that, once the Islamic Republic is brought back into the fold, it will fade away on its own. This — according to most experts in Iran's complicated politics — is a dangerous miscalculation. All the factions involved in the struggle for power in Tehran are determined to keep the network intact, although some may want to limit its use in time and space. The mullahs know that it was the threat of violence, and the fact that 'Holy Terror' is holding American and French citizens hostage in Lebanon, which persuaded Reagan and the French premier Jacques Chirac that the 'unthinkable' must be swallowed so that talks could be held with the Islamic Republic.

The network of 'Holy Terror', has, as a result, been greatly strengthened by the revelations of Reagan's secret attempts to win favour from the mullahs. The incentive for seizing more western hostages and launching more attacks on western interests in the Middle East is today at its highest for over five years. □

Amir Taheri is an Iranian, and editor of the Paris-based Jeune Afrique.

Responses to terrorism

President Ronald Reagan speaking to the American Bar Association — 9 July 1985:
'So there we have it, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Cuba, Nicaragua — continents away, tens of thousands of miles apart — but the same goals and objectives. I submit to you that the growth in terrorism in recent years results from the increasing involvement of these states in terrorism in every region of the world . . . And we are especially not going to tolerate these attacks from outlaw states run by the strangest collection of misfits, looney tunes, and squalid criminals since the advent of the Third Reich.'

Secretary of State George Schultz speaking in Yugoslavia — 17 December 1985:
'In dealing with the problem, we need to create an atmosphere so terrorists have no place to hide and are brought to justice.'

President Ronald Reagan defending the arms deal with Iran — 20 November 1986:
'It was a high risk gamble . . . the circumstances were warranted, and I don't see that it has been a fiasco or a great failure of any kind.' ●

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Who's afraid of the state?

'TERRORISM is an *ex post facto* definition' says Franco Ferracuti, perhaps the world's greatest authority on the subject. 'Half the members of the United Nations got there by using what others would have called terrorism. You're only a terrorist if you lose.' Terrorism is one of those subjects where the simple popular verities melt away under analysis. There is no real agreement even on definitions. Is a state which terrifies its citizens by the use of arbitrary detention and torture terrorist? Is massive 'counter-terrorist' retaliation against innocent civilians itself terrorist?

There is not even agreement on what constitutes a terrorist act. Thus between 1982 and 1984 there were 220 acts of violence against abortion and family planning clinics in the US (including arson, shooting, bombing, and hostage-taking), but the FBI, reflecting the strong anti-abortion prejudices of the Reagan Administration, refuses to term these acts 'terrorist' on the grounds that no organised group publicly claims responsibility for them. One can sometimes almost see the point of the terrorists (cited by Stephen Segaller in his *Invisible Armies*[1]) who argue that to proclaim non-violence is merely to accept the state monopoly on violence, and that this is the worst situation of all for the state has power and authority as well.

A clutch of recent books on terrorism reflect the view that it is a problem we will have to live with. Segaller is admirably blunt: 'The terrorist can strike at anyone, anywhere, at any time. Nothing will eliminate terrorism; defeating it is a pipedream'. (Segaller's is the best overall survey of the subject here — though marred by mis-spellings, eg. guerrilla consistently written as 'guerilla', Batista as 'Battista'. Embarrassingly, it even mis-spells words like embarrassing, and it wrongly describes *Le Matin* as a communist paper. Rosie's book[2] provides a wonderfully comprehensive listing of terrorist acts and actors but its dictionary form makes it a work of reference only. The Freedman collection[3] is sensible, thoughtful but rather slim.)

In some ways, the problem is wildly exaggerated. Fewer than 5,000 people have died in terrorist acts in the last 20 years (and, despite Reagan's rhetoric, less than 10 per cent of these were Americans) — a fraction of what we lose through road accidents or lung cancer in a single year. The repeated allegations that some countries (Reagan's list is Libya, Iran, North Korea, Cuba and Nicaragua) deliberately foment terrorism rests on very flimsy foundations. The Cuban and Nicaraguan examples are clearly the product of Reagan's topsy-turvy, almost Disney-like mind (indeed, the examples were given in the famous 'loony tunes' speech with quite self-conscious echoes of Disney): both states have far more clearly been the object of (US) state-sponsored terrorism than the initiators of it.

A fortiori, the frequent claim that the Russians sponsor terrorism is not taken seriously by most authorities. (This claim was officially launched by Alexander Haig, but even George Shultz shows some embarrassment about it.) The Russians do support what they term national liberation movements — which is, with only minor changes in terminology, what the US says it is doing with the contras. But the Soviets condemn as terrorist those groups, like the Japanese Red Army or the German Red Brigade, to which they do not accord that label. The most clear-cut case of state-sponsored terrorism in recent time was that of France in the *Rainbow Warrior* affair — but neither Thatcher nor Reagan have talked about sanctions against Paris.

Finally, the record of all the major powers in regard to terrorism is hypocritical and inconsistent. In practice all of them do bargain and make deals with terrorists — these books burst with examples. The press is often quite wonderfully obtuse or blind about this. We only know about Reagan's arms-for-hostages trading with Iran because, for domestic factional reasons, a leading Iranian politician broadcast the deal: the press sat in its offices and got the story off its telex machines. Similarly, the press reports Terry Waite's exploits as the everyday story of divine Anglican miracle-worker folk. Has no-one thought of finding out whether he is anything more than a middleman, and, if so, what currency

State-sponsored terrorism *par excellence*; but where are the calls for sanctions against Paris?

The gentle terrorist

THE WAY to Dr Petros was barred. Between the good doctor and myself stood three Ethiopian expatriates and two pallid Britons, both in their 20s, both sporting CND badges. I had the wrong day, a regrettable mistake had been made.

Dr Petros, an Ethiopian, is a member of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) — the badge wearers, presumably, supporters. The EPLF are secessionists, engaged in a bloody 20-year-long war with the Ethiopian government (whatever its political hue) for control of Eritrea, an inhospitable triangle of land in the North of the country. Petros is in charge of the EPLF's field hospital at Orotta, a remarkable underground facility.

The Ethiopian government would waste no time in asserting the organisation's terrorist status — pointing to the occupation of a large chunk of Ethiopian territory without sanction from the State, reliance on classic guerrilla-style raids for the advancement of the Eritrean front line, and, specifically, EPLF disruption of Red Cross food convoys. But the rambling, at times convincing answers, Petros gave to my unremarkable questions when we finally met, and the presence of those CND members underline the cliché that in terrorism, there are no moral certainties.

What was the military strategy his organisation followed? 'It is a protracted struggle. The objective is not only national independence, but also social transformation.' (The EPLF are avowedly Marxist.)

How could he, a doctor, justify the use of violence in pursuit of those objectives? The familiar answer: 'Well if you look at the history of the struggle, initially the Eritreans tried peacefully to gain their independence going to the United Nations . . . But this didn't work . . . And in the early 1960s Haile Selassie annexed Eritrea, and from then on the war has escalated.' Superpower involvement (with the USA backing Haile Selassie, the USSR the current administration) left the UN closed to the EPLF. He argued they had no alternative but violence.

But what about attacking Red Cross convoys? No, no the EPLF had never done that . . . they never attacked lorries that were properly marked . . . And weren't the EPLF backed by the Saudis, superpower for superpower? Another unconvincing reply: no, they were entirely dependent on the materials they captured from the Ethiopians.

And wasn't the Eritrean cause doomed to failure — at best a war of attrition, at worst defeat, as the government's superior force ground down the EPLF? First the rhetoric: 'No, no we would never have come this far without the support of the people. And the support of the people will ensure that the struggle will never end.' In fact the people's support can be counted on less and less — food shortages and mounting casualties have begun to tell. And in the next breath Petros admitted that indeed the struggle was becoming more difficult, with the EPLF penned in behind the front line.

Yet despite the incoherence of all his answers, there is something compelling about a man who tells you that he joined an outlawed organisation, after he had been treating another child with a deep bullet wound. 'I thought that I could better use my scalpel on the side of my people — even if they did carry guns.' ●

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he trades in? Arms, Landrovers, money — or really just prayers?

TYPICALLY, groups have recourse to terrorism when they have bitterly-felt grievances and face overwhelming military might which rules out conventional means of resistance. This was a quite ordinary feature of the colonial situation and there it is quite common to find examples of terrorist wars, successfully won. Ironically, perhaps, the Israel of Irgun and the Stern Gang is the prototype, but the dynamics of the 'armed struggle' in Algeria or Zimbabwe were much the same. Terrorism triumphs in such situations because it enjoys at least latent mass support and because the oppressor, once tired of it, has somewhere else to go.

These examples are undeniably potent in a world where three quarters of the population lives in poverty and faces a privileged one quarter who have both an inevitable neo-colonial hold over the poor and possess overwhelming military superiority. Yet the fact remains that the rich-poor division has never yet provided a satisfactory basis for terrorist struggle. Such struggles are always phrased in ethnic, religious or national terms. Only those basic forms of identification seem capable of sustaining the fanaticism necessary to prolonged terrorist struggle. As Segaller points out in a fascinating section on the internal psychology of terrorist groups, they are easy to join but impossible to leave except through death.

At the other end of the spectrum lies the utterly hopeless and counter-productive terrorism of ideological groups in developed countries — Baader-Meinhof, the Angry Brigade, the Red Brigades, Rote Fahne and so on. Such groups do, fatally, tend to see the struggle in class terms. They always lose: they lack any support and merely allow for the state to reinforce itself against dissidents in general. Such groups are an utterly pointless menace to everyone.

The really hard cases are the marginal ones, like the IRA, ETA, the Kurds or the plethora of Middle Eastern groups which enjoy only some of the conditions necessary to success: they have some support, but not enough — and the oppressor has nowhere else to go. The result is that there is no result and a ghastly war of attrition wends on forever.

It is easy, reading these books, for the subject to become *banalisé*. The ghost that loomed over it all for me was that of Leon Klinghoffer, the 69-year-old Jewish American shot dead in his wheel-chair on the *Achille Lauro*. His body, unceremoniously dumped overboard, washed up on the shores of Syria. It is difficult to imagine a more inexcusable crime. Reading these books one has to keep tight hold of the fact that crude retaliation never works, that simplistic formulae won't do — but an even tighter hold of a straightforward moral revulsion against such acts being considered the ordinary coinage of war by anyone, anywhere. The trouble is that, as these books show, even that revulsion is simplistic, even that won't suffice. □

R. W. Johnson is a fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.

[1]S. Segaller, *Invisible Armies: Terrorism into the 1990s* (Michael Joseph), viii, 311p, £15.95;
[2]G. Rosie, *The Directory of International Terrorism* (Mainstream), 310p, £14.95;
[3]L. Freedman et al., *Terrorism and International Order* (RKP), 112p, £5.95.

A partial who's who

ACTION DIRECTE: A left-wing French group which first appeared in the late 1970s with a series of attacks in and around Paris, Toulouse and Marseilles. The AD are thought to have been built on two earlier organisations and led by Jean-Marc Rouillan and Nathalie Merugnon (both captured and later released by the French authorities). In January 1985 Action Direct announced the formation of a 'political military front' with West Germany's *Rote Armee Fraktion (RAF)* to attack US and NATO bases throughout Europe.

BRIGATE ROSSE: 'Red Brigades'. One of the largest of the European left-wing groups which grew out of the failure of the New Left in the late 1960s, the Brigate Rosse also had roots in the old-established Communist Party of Italy. They began their operations in 1974 under the intellectual leadership of Renato Curcio and his wife Margherita Cagol (killed in a shooting in 1975). Although deprived of Curcio's lead at an early stage (1976) and fiercely persecuted by the Italian police after the killing of Aldo Moro in 1978, the Red Brigades persisted in their campaign of assassination and bombing. By 1982, it was estimated that the Brigate Rosse had killed 50 people, kidnapped another 50, and cost the Italian state around $90 million of damage.

GREY WOLVES: Neo-fascist Turkish terrorist group active in Turkey and Western Europe in the 1970s, though some experts estimate the organisation still possesses 26,000 members in more than 80 branches, with organisations throughout Europe. Drawn from the youth wing of the fascist National Action Party, led by Colonel Alparsan Turkes, the Wolves were accused by the Turkish authorities of murdering 700 left-wingers between 1974 and 1981. Their most high profile assassin was Mehmet Ali Agca, who tried to kill Pope John Paul II in May 1981.

ISLAMIC JIHAD: (Islamic Holy War). Loosely organised, Islamic Jihad is believed to be a Shi'ite Muslim organisation which grew up in the Baalbek Valley in Lebanon in 1982-3. Although probably trained by Iranians in the Baalbak camps, the Jihad is not thought to take orders from Iran. The organisation was described by the Shi'ite religious leader Sheikh Mohammed Fadlallah as 'a cover not for one group, but different groups'. In addition to a campaign of bombings against Western interests in Lebanon, Islamic Jihad have been responsible for the assassination of the President of the American University in Beirut, and the kidnapping of a series of Western journalists, diplomats, and clergymen.

NIDAL, ABU (born 1935): real name Sabry Khalil Bana — his nom de guerre means 'Father of the Struggle'. Born into a prosperous middle-class family in Jaffa (then part of Palestine) Nidal's family fled in 1948 to Beirut, where it is believed Nidal was educated at the America University. After the 1967 'Six-Day War', Nidal joined the main PLO faction 'Fatah' and rose through the PLO hierarchy becoming the PLO's main representative in Iraq. By the early 1970s Nidal had come to believe that Arafat's policies were futile and harmful to the Palestinians.

In 1973 Nidal set up his own military organisation, the *Fatah Revolutionary Council (FRC)*, which tried to assassinate Arafat in 1974. The PLO's response was to condemn Nidal to death. Operating out of Baghdad and then Syria, Nidal's organisation has been responsible for the assassination of PLO representatives in London, Kuwait, Paris, and Portugal, and launched attacks on Egyptians, Jordanians, and European Jews in Vienna, Rome and Paris – most notably Shlomo Argov, the Israeli Ambassador to Britain in 1982.

ROTE ARMEE FRAKTION (RAF): 'Red Army Faction'. Also known as the Baader-Meinhof Gang, the RAF was founded in 1967 by Andreas Baader, Ulrike Meinhof and Gudrun Ensslin. They launched their campaign against Western capitalism in 1968 by planting incendiary bombs in a Frankfurt department store. After a period of study and training in Palestinian camps, the nucleus of the RAF returned to Europe and began bombing US military bases, police stations, and the offices of the right-wing Springer press. The government's response was to step up police efficiency, and in 1972 Baader, Meinhof and Ensslin and 18 RAF members were arrested and jailed.

Although deprived of its founder-members, the RAF probably reached a peak in 1977 when the organisation killed Attorney General Siegfried Buback (and his guards), Hans Martin Schleyer (and his guards), and mounted a rocket attack on the Federal Justice department offices.

ULSTER DEFENCE ASSOCIATION (UDA): Largest and most powerful of the many Loyalist paramilitary groups operating in Northern Ireland. Rooted firmly in the Protestant working class, the UDA probably reached a peak in 1972 when it had an estimated 40,000 members and could bring whole areas of Belfast to a halt. The UDA has always been able to attract gangsters more interested in the cash they can extract from the Protestant communities than in any political stance.

WORLD ANTI COMMUNIST LEAGUE (WACL): Right-wing organisation founded in Taiwan in 1967, and with close links to the Unification Church (Moonies). Based in the USA and run by retired US General John K. Singlaub, the League specialises in raising large sums of money for 'anti-Communist' groups operating around the world, mainly in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia. Apart from the $20 million for the Contras laundered by the Reagan Administration through WACL, WACL support is also thought to have been given to the death squads which operated in Argentina, Uruguay, El Salvador, and Chile. ●

Source: The Directory of International Terrorism *by George Rosie, pub. Mainstream Books.*

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ELECTORAL SYSTEM

PR could yet win by default

***The two-nation divide is having the unnoticed side-effect of demolishing the main arguments used to defend our 'first-past-the-post' electoral system, argue* JOHN CURTICE *and* MICHAEL STEED**

IT IS NOW commonplace to argue that Britain is divided socially, economically and politically into two nations. In the North and in the inner cities we have declining, deprived and Labour Britain; in the South and the rural shires, prosperous, booming Conservative Britain. The political division was stark at the last election. Labour only won three seats outside London south of a line from the Wash to the Bristol Channel, while the Conservatives failed to win any seats in Liverpool or Glasgow for the first time since 1886. While Conservative and Labour support has always varied somewhat from one part of the country to another, never before has their support been so geographically concentrated.

But if these facts are widely known, one of their important consequences is not. The North/South, urban/rural divide in Conservative and Labour support has undermined the validity of many of the arguments commonly deployed to defend the continued use of the first-past-the-post electoral system in Westminster elections.

What are those arguments? First, the system produces a clear result: one party wins an overall majority in the Commons and that party duly takes up the reins of office. The government is chosen by the electorate and not by the politicians in some shady backroom deal. And in a political system where the government is more powerful than parliament, being able to determine the political colour of the government is more important than having a House of Commons which faithfully reflects the political views of the nation. Second, it is argued that when coalition deals are made it is often the small parties who decide who takes office. Thus, for much of the period since 1945 the West German Free Democrats have decided whether the Christian Democrats or the Social Democrats are in power. Although proportional representation may allocate seats proportionately between the parties, power is given disproportionately to small parties.

Both these arguments depend upon the first-past-the-post electoral system having one crucial quality — an ability systematically to exaggerate the relationship between seats and votes. The winning party is given a bonus of seats which ensures that it has a safe overall majority even though it may have only a narrow lead in votes. This portrayal of the electoral system was indeed correct twenty years ago. Given that neither the Conservatives nor Labour have won over 50 per cent of the vote in the post-war period and that the two parties have commonly been no more than 2 or 3 per cent apart, the exaggerative quality of the system has been crucial to both parties' ability to secure an overall majority.

But the picture is now very different. The winner's bonus has almost entirely disappeared. It existed because a small shift of votes nationally between Conservative and Labour produced a much larger turnover of seats — a 1 per cent swing of votes resulted on average in 3 per cent of the seats changing hands. Nearly a third of all Commons seats were marginal between Conservative and Labour. *But since 1955 the number of marginal seats has more than halved* so that now a 1 per cent swing of votes results in little more than 1 per cent of the seats changing hands. The electoral system is close to acting just like a proportional one in its relative treatment of Conservative and Labour.

This has been the change brought about by the increased geographical concentration of Conservative and Labour support. The emergence of a North/South urban/rural divide has not been sudden. The trend first began to emerge at the 1959 election and Conservative and Labour support became yet more divergent at each subsequent election. The cumulative effect has been quite dramatic. Compared with the country as a whole there has been an average 24 per cent swing from Conservative to Labour since 1955 in big city seats in Scotland, while in the most rural seats in the South and the Midlands there has been a 16 per cent swing in the opposite direction. The vast majority of seats in England and Scotland (in Wales there has been no consistent long-term trend) have moved more and more into either the Labour camp or the Conservative one — leaving increasingly fewer seats in which the two parties are in close contention.

THE FALL in the number of Conservative/Labour marginals has undoubtedly been brought about by the long-term social and economic trends which have produced such different life chances in the North and the inner cities from those in the South and in the countryside. There is no reason to believe it will be reversed; if anything, it could continue yet further to a situation where *less* seats change hands between Conservative and Labour than would under a proportional system.

The existing electoral system will not in future, therefore, operate in the way its defenders have taken for granted. The system cannot provide either the Conservatives or Labour with an overall majority if the result in terms of votes is close. It is no longer an adequate defence against the need for backroom deals to determine who forms the government.

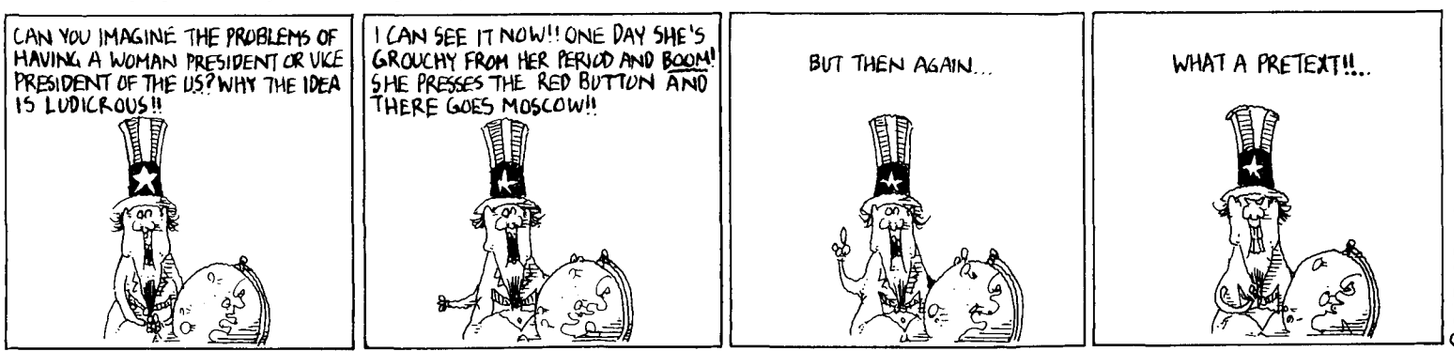
Further, the existing electoral system is more likely than a proportional one to place power in the hands of small parties. For while a hung parliament is now the most probable outcome of any general election, this does not necessarily mean that the Alliance will hold the balance of power. Rather it is quite possible that either the Conservatives or Labour will be a little short of an overall majority and look to the Northern Ireland Unionists or perhaps the Scottish and Welsh Nationalists rather than the Alliance for the votes that will keep them in power.

The widespread failure to understand the implications of the fundamental changes in Britain's electoral geography for the operation of the electoral system means that the threadbare nature of much of the case in its defence has not been appreciated. The *objectives* of that case are credible and defensible. But the existing electoral system is no longer a suitable *means* for achieving those objectives.

Defenders of the majoritarian principle ought to be looking for alternative ways of achieving their aims. It is possible to devise an electoral system which ensures a systematic exaggeration of the relationship between seats and votes so that small parties are discouraged and large parties favoured irrespective of the geographical distribution of their vote. Such a system is used, for example, in Greece. Yet no proposals have been forthcoming at all. Unless they are, the advocates of proportional representation may win the argument by default. □

John Curtice is lecturer in politics, University of Liverpool. Michael Steed is senior lecturer in government, University of Manchester. *This article is based on research reported in 'Proportionality and Exaggeration in the British Electoral System' published today by Butterworths in* Electoral Studies. *Copies (£1.50 + 20p p&p) will also be available from Hebden Royd Publications. The Birchcliffe Centre, Hebden Bridge, West Yorks. HX7 8DG.*

See also review of Peter Hain on PR, p.22.


CAN YOU IMAGINE THE PROBLEMS OF HAVING A WOMAN PRESIDENT OR VICE PRESIDENT OF THE US? WHY THE IDEA IS LUDICROUS!!
I CAN SEE IT NOW!! ONE DAY SHE'S GROUCHY FROM HER PERIOD AND BOOM! SHE PRESSES THE RED BUTTON AND THERE GOES MOSCOW!!
BUT THEN AGAIN...
WHAT A PRETEXT!!...
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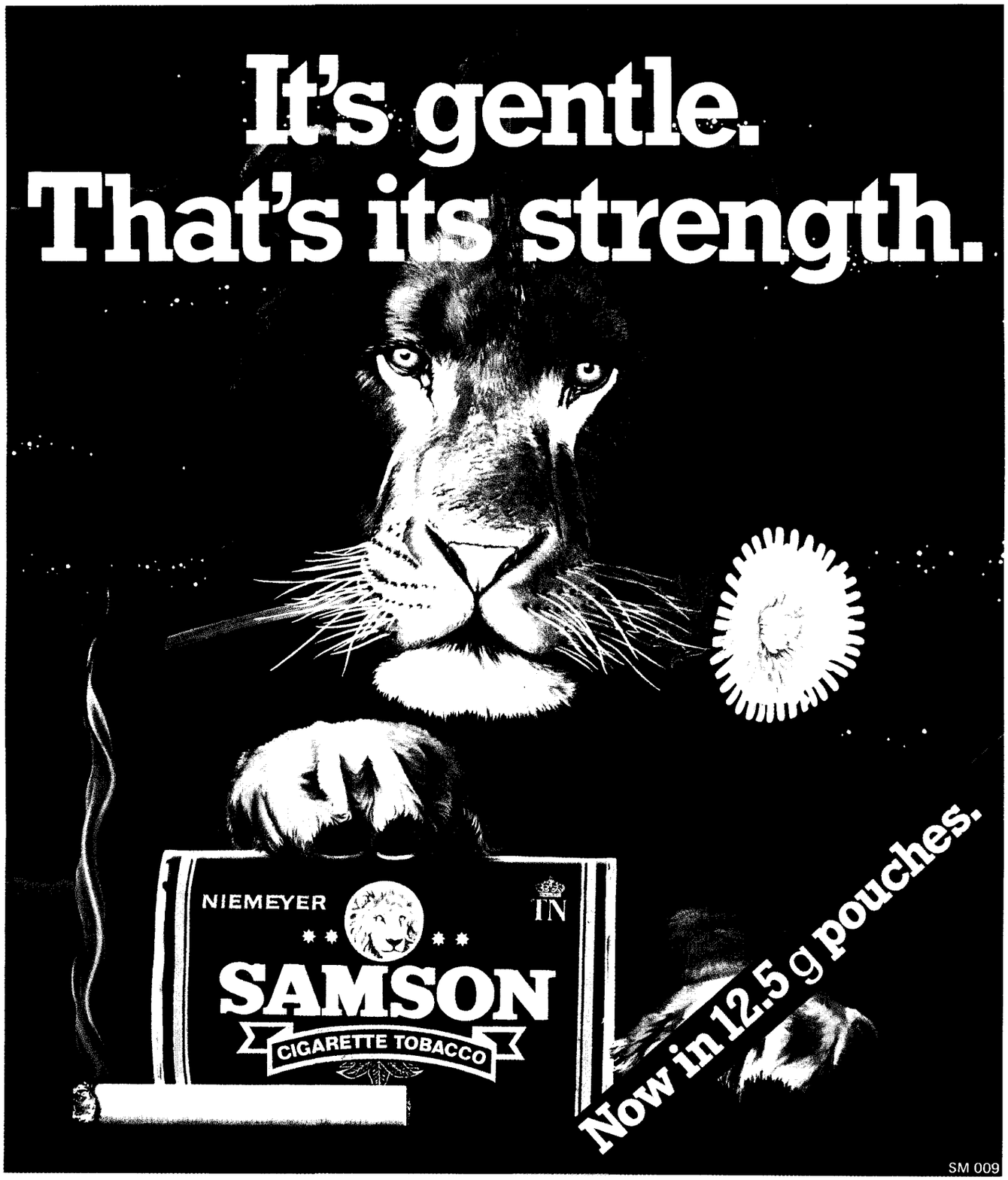

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MOSCOW DIARY

It's a depressing thought, but there may yet be new worlds to conquer for the likes of Saatchi and Saatchi. The new buzz-word around the Soviet Foreign Trade Ministry is 'Mahkettink', which means exactly what it sounds like. The main foreign affairs think-tank has just combined with the chamber of commerce to set up a chair of marketing. As if to celebrate the event the Moscow buses have suddenly spouted ads for Pepsi-Cola.

Pepsi is one of the last bastions of the special relationship that ex-President Richard Nixon forged with the Kremlin. When he was Eisenhower's Vice-President, Nixon came to Moscow to open an exhibition of the American way of life and, in an all-American kitchen at the exhibition, he enjoyed the celebrated and acrimonious 'kitchen debate' with Nikita Kruschchev. Photographs of the row featured prominently a bottle of Pepsi-Cola: indeed, Krushchev was having his first taste of the stuff at the time. Nixon then became a director of Pepsi-Co and the company won a contract to market the drink in the Soviet Union. Now Pepsi-Co has signed a letter of intent to install 100 Pizza Huts across the USSR.

I hope it does better than Moscow's first two pizza parlours, supplied and opened by the Italians. Now that Russian staff and suppliers have taken over, they sometimes run out of cheese and tomato paste. I was once offered a substitute pizza of mincemeat, beetroot and yogurt. It was not nice. And since the supply of Italian wine had dried up, I was almost tempted to join my Russian neighbours in washing the pizza down with a bottle of vermouth. Almost, but not quite.

○

Even since the pre-war years, when most western Moscow-watchers were based in Riga, capital of then-independent Latvia, Kremlinology has been an art most often practised from a distance. To this day, they sit in western universities and think-tanks, poring over the Soviet newspapers and magazines, and studying the BBC monitoring service reports of Moscow radio.

These days, they will need a satellite dish and a video recorder. Some of the most dramatic signs of change are taking place on Soviet TV. There is a regular programme called 'World and Youth' which runs discussions between teenagers and hapless adults. You can watch education ministers being harassed by the end-users of their products, floundering as they try to answer pointed questions about the way recent Soviet history is taught. We had a follow-up this week, in which schoolkids talked frankly about joining the Komsomol, the party youth organisation. 'You just tell the usual lies to get in, nobody cares,' drawled one blasé young lad. Then there were some parents complaining that their boy was rejected because he told the truth, and said he didn't think he was progressing too well in chemistry at school. 'If he had lied like the rest of them, he would have been accepted,' the father said.

After hammering the Soviet education system, the schools and the Komsomol, the discussion turned to a thoughtful adult official. 'You have to recognise that any society gets the schools it deserves,' he began. My Russian chums remain baffled. 'We do not know what the new rules are yet,' said one old communist, who joined the party in the war, is still nominally a member, but privately withdrew his allegiance some 30 years ago. 'Under Stalin we learned never to say what we thought. Under Krushchev, we knew we could say what we liked in the privacy of our homes. But now you hear all sorts of things on TV. It's unsettling.'

○

People are obviously cautious about all this talk of reforms. My favourite daily paper *Sovietskaya Rossiya* recently ran a rather good piece about a chap in Irkutsk who wanted to set up a small private co-op to do repairs on people's flats. He could quote Mikhail Gorbachev's speech to the party congress and press accounts of the new law on private initiative and workers' co-ops which made it clear it was all legal, and even encouraged. But he could get no party or government officials in Irkutsk who would give him an authorising letter that would let him set up shop, and have the right to buy building materials.

Sovietskaya Rossiya then sent its reporters around the various Moscow ministries to try to get this man the right document. At Gossnab, the state supply board, they were told 'until our authorised experiment with small co-ops in the scrap metal business is complete, we have nothing to say'. Gosbank, the state finance houses, said they would be glad to extend credit to the co-op 'just as soon as we get instruction authorising us to do so'. Who would give such instructions? They suggested Gossnab.

'No one is against this Irkutsk' man's project, but no one will give a concrete answer,' *Sovietskaya Rossiya* complained. So far the public response has been a spate of letters to the paper from people denouncing this Irkutsk chap for trying to get himself up as a new bourgeois. 'He will plunder us on legal grounds,' said one letter.

○

This sense of confusion about how far reform can and should go has made the British Film Week in Moscow an even greater success than expected. Paul Scofield's magisterial peformance in *A Man for all Seasons* carries a heavy allegorical message in the modern Soviet Union. What is the honest bureaucrat to do when the charismatic man in power changes his mind, and overturns the old, agreed religion?

The Russians are to have a return match in London next year, and I trust that our own film bureaucrats will fight to ensure a showing of *Repentance*, or *Pokoyaniye*, which is currently the talk of Moscow. Made in Georgia, it is a haunting and beautiful film about dictatorships and their ways. Everyone is convinced it is about Beria, Stalin's secret police chief. I wish I could be so sure. One of the disappointments of seeing something 'daring' in Moscow is sitting for three rather dull hours at the theatre, and waiting for those five lines when the entire audience says 'oooh' and goes away feeling shocked, delighted and slightly dissident. *Pokoyaniye* is better than that, because even between the shattering scenes of a woman looking for the address of her husband's prison camp scrawled on one anonymous log in a lumber yard, while the wood is being chopped into sawdust, the film continues to delight the eye.

○

There is no doubt that we are going through another cultural thaw in Moscow. The Pushkin gallery is now giving an exhibition of the works of Rafael Falk, who spent the last 50 years as an un-person, and *Dr Zhivago* is allegedly to be published next year. But much of the thaw is about re-fighting the battles of 25 years ago. It revolves around the same magazine, *Novyi Mir*, and has many of the same old campaigners like Yevtushenko and Voznesensky, and fights over the same old ground, on whether or not to publish Boris Pasternak. We have yet to discern what new issues the new generation will impose. We got a clue last week at an evening of rock music, poetry and discussion held at the Manazh, the Tsar's old riding school just opposite the Kremlin. Voznesensky organised the event and found himself almost howled down by a band of young hippies who demanded to know what right he had to decide what was art and what was not. And they wanted to know whatever had happened to those other angry young poets of 1960. Voznesensky was doing well, they charged, writing sycophantic poems in *Pravda*. But what of the others?

One of the curious features of the whole Gorbachev reform is that it is being carried out by middle-aged people. The reaction of Soviet youth to all this ageing reformism is something nobody really understands. There are clues in the teenage cynicism and introspection we see on Soviet TV, in the growing signs of religious revival and in the sudden emergence of violent street gangs. So far, I have yet to see any new young poets or writers emerge, although the rock scene is healthy enough. It is a sobering thought that the new novel everyone is waiting for is Ribakov's *Children of the Arbat* which is being billed as the first honest account of Stalin's purges. Anatoly Ribakov is 75.

Martin Walker

Martin Walker is Moscow Correspondent of the Guardian.

ROGER WODDIS

The Gas-man Cometh

'I spy with my little eye something beginning with "S".'— British Gas ad

I spy with my little eye
Something beginning with 'S'.
It must be that crap on the telly
And plastered all over the press.
You won't see it printed in *Pravda*
Or given the treatment by Tass,
But oh, for the funds that are flowing,
With everyone going for gas!

I spy with my little eye
Something beginning with 'P'.
It could be prospectus or profits
That bubble beneath the North Sea.
Perhaps it's the privatised punters,
Persuaded to put in their bid,
But what's more important than buying
Is telling that silly sod Sid.

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The anti-anti-racists

The* Salisbury Review *racial thinkers are increasing in confidence — if not in scholarship.* JOLYON JENKINS *reports

A NEW BOOK from a front-room publishers in Wanstead wouldn't normally merit 30 column centimetres in the *Independent*'s news pages. On Monday, one did: *Anti-Racism, an assault on education and value* (Sherwood Press, ed. Frank Palmer) by chance became topical because of the race row in Brent, and Nicholas Ridley's attack on the 'Loony Left'. The book is essentially the *Salisbury Review* mafia — Scruton, Cox, Honeyford et al — appearing in hard covers, gunning for the anti-racist movement in all its various and conflicting manifestations.

Maybe guerrilla warfare is a better metaphor. The tactic of many of the 14 contributors is to select one aspect of the movement, make a few debating points, and withdraw, giving the impression of having defeated the entire movement. The same targets get selected — the Institute of Race Relations' booklet *How Racism Came to Britain* is mauled by three authors — and the same points get made: twice we learn that American Jews are over-represented among Nobel prize winners; three contributors remind us that black men participated in the slave trade.

But it's in close up that many of the arguments seem threadbare. Let's look at one short section of one piece: 'Clarifying the Concepts', the contribution of Antony Flew, Emeritus professor of philosophy at Reading University.

He cited a survey carried out in June 1982 by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) which showed that '59 per cent of young people of West Indian origin were unemployed, as compared with 41 per cent of their white peers'. 'It is clear,' says Flew, 'that the CRE . . . would like the rest of us to believe that this "potentially explosive" disparity is due to white racism . . .' He then points out that in the same survey, *Asian* youth unemployment is 40 per cent — *less* than that for white young people. He concludes that the primary moral we should draw 'from this sort of evidence' is that

> we should now look for most of the explanation of underachievement in any underachieving immigrant group: not in white, or even in non-white racism, but in cultural differences, in the broadest sense, between those groups and others. Suppose, for instance that it is the case that in British schools 43 per cent of the children from West Indian families have only one parent, as against 5 per cent of those from Asian and 20 per cent of those from all families. Then that fact alone might be sufficient to explain most of the present scholastic underachievement of our British Afro-Caribbeans.

An astounding claim, and so lightly made: that *racial disadvantage is the fault of the disadvantaged group*. Other contributors make the same point. But it just doesn't stand up. The 40 per cent figure for Asian youth unemployment (the only one Flew quotes) is not typical. The statistical handbook for racial disadvantage is a Policy Studies Institute survey, also carried out in 1982: *Black and White Britain*, by Colin Brown. It found that male unemployment for 16-19 year olds was: white, 30 per cent; West Indian, 46 per cent; Asian, 35 per cent. For no age or sex group did white unemployment exceed either Asian or West Indian.

Flew is right if he is suggesting that it's unilluminating simply to cite the differential rates of unemployment and ascribe them all to 'racism'; but the CRE doesn't. Indeed, one of its Commissioners, Dr B Parekh, a member of the much-maligned Swann 'Committee of Inquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups', has been criticised by sections of the black community for insisting that social factors *have* to be examined.

But Flew's suggestion that the high incidence of single parent families 'might alone be sufficient' to explain different school performances is — how shall we put it — plain ignorant. The Swann report examined the correlation between children's performance and a number of social factors and found that when combined, factors like father's occupation, overcrowding, low income, and, indeed, one parent families, went a long way — but not all the way — to explaining the disparity. Professor Nicholas Mackintosh of Cambridge University, who carried out the analysis, told us this week: 'the central point that Flew is making I don't think you can support at all: incidence of one parent families isn't alone sufficient to account for any difference in school performance.' Is it significant that the one 'social factor' that Flew chose is the one that it is easiest to blame on West Indian families themselves? ('Father's job' would serve his purpose less well, since it might itself be a product of racism.)

> ***'The term Marxist is used, tabloid-fashion, as one of abuse'***

Flew is nobody's fool. He actually makes money from his reputation for clear thought: one of his best selling books, *Thinking About Thinking*, is the standard manual for philosophy undergraduates on how to spot fallacies in arguments. He just sends his critical faculties on holiday when he moves from philosophy to politics. Most entertaining of all is to see him tripped up in his footnotes by one of his own fallacies. 'To any genuine and consistent opponent of racism positive discrimination must be as repugnant as negative,' he writes: a classic example of what he once dubbed the 'No True Scotsman' move — 'a piece of sleight of mind [which] replaces a logically contingent with a logically necessary proposition'.

IF FLEW is careless, other contributors just seem malicious. The attack by David Levy, senior lecturer in sociology at Middlesex Poly, on Robert Moore of Aberdeen University is an example. His contribution is largely a criticism of a lecture given by Moore to the British Association for the Advancement of Science; Moore's lecture was in part a reasoned attempt to show that the useful insights of the conservative tradition in sociology have been distorted by the British new right. But you wouldn't know this from Levy's chapter, which implies that Moore was simply slinging mud.

Levy's piece only *works* on the assumption that the reader isn't familiar with Moore's lecture. Moreover, he attacks Moore on the curious grounds that one of his books was published by Pluto Press. This is apparently extra evidence that Moore is a Marxist — the term is intermittently used throughout the book, tabloid-fashion, as one of abuse. Moore happily admits, as what sociologist would not, that he has been influenced by Marx, but more by Weber. Weber doesn't even appear in the index — but then, 'Weberian' is a less resonant insult than 'Marxist'.

There's plenty more of this. The book isn't entirely without intelligence and insight, but too high a proportion is propaganda masquerading as scholarship. Unsourced anecdotes, virulent abuse, simple errors — Ambalvaner Sivanandan does *not* have a doctorate (pp7, 82-93, and 120-122) Stephen Rose is *not* a member of the Communist Party (p.30), Stalin did *not* kill 60 million Jews (p.77).

The authors will expect to be condemned by the left as racists. But this would be too simple; and it would play into their hands. They all make a point of *condemning* racism, while (in some cases) minimising its importance. For example, Ray Honeyford: 'My hunch . . . is that most people in Britain are prejudiced non-discriminators.' But why rely on hunches, when you can have research? Let's remind Honeyford and the rest of some more classic findings, also by the PSI (*Racial Discrimination: 17 years after the act*, 1986). Researchers sent identical bogus letters of application to employers, signed some with Asian sounding-names, and in others pretended to have a West Indian origin. They found that just on this basis at least a third of employers they approached discriminated against Asian and/or West Indian 'applicants'. True, a third is not 'most'; but it's hardly insignificant.

Other contributors draw elegant distinctions between 'prejudice' and 'preference'; 'I hold,' writes Dennis O'Keefe, a senior lecturer at North London Poly, 'that to prefer one's children to marry people of the same race as oneself is an acceptable preference. The right to exercise this preference is every bit as important as the right of people of different races to intermarry . . .' Another blast of 'commonsense' comes from Simon Pearce of the Monday Club: 'The native British have a right to preserve their way of life and this must mean that it is their culture which predominates in our schools.'

Nothing is to be gained by trying to 'prove' racism in individual contributors. What matters is the intellectual climate they produce — a climate which is desperately important, because they have the ear of the prime minister, and greater access to the media than most academics. It allows less acute minds than theirs (tabloid editors, cabinet ministers) to feel free to write racist editorials or pursue racist policies. The remarkable thing is that they now feel sufficiently confident to peddle this poor stuff without fear of being contradicted by the people who know better. To ignore it would be disastrous. □

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Ex-spies I've known in the Commons

As the pressure mounts for proper Parliamentary supervision of the intelligence services,* ANDREW ROTH *reminisces about ex-MI6 characters who have sat on the green benches

IN THE FACE of the government's ludicrous inconsistencies in handling blabbing former MI5 agents, it is barely possible that Mrs Thatcher may retreat into conceding a select committee on the security services. If she does, ask mischievous MPs, will she name to it curmudgeonly Cranley Onslow, whom she sacked as a Foreign Office minister but who is now chairman of the Tory backbenchers' 1922 Committee? He is the latest of a long line of ex-spooks on Tory benches.

Former MI6 men in Parliament are a dead giveaway through the places they worked previously and the unimaginatively clumsy way in which they try to disguise those former jobs. (Even articulate Roy Jenkins conceals his wartime intelligence work). Cranley Onslow joined MI6 and the Foreign Office after serving in the 7th Hussars. He was posted, nominally as consul, to Maymyo, near the Burma-China border, in 1955-56. He then transferred back to the office of the Foreign Office's permanent under secretary, who controls foreign intelligence operations. When I pointed out in *Parliamentary Profiles* proofs that he was an ex-MI6 man, he refused to confirm or deny, simply threatening a libel action.

The first spook I knew in the Commons was handsome, blond and genial Neil ('Billy') McLean, who came in for Inverness in the 1954 by-election. I had previously known him in South Asia where he 'happened' to turn up in all the hotspots I was covering as a foreign correspondent. He also managed to get into and get expelled from a few places like Sinjiang, the Northwest China rubbing point with Russia, that I could not penetrate.

He was involved in a 1949 attempt to win Albania back to Western sympathies in the wake of Tito's defection from Stalinism. But the effort, according to last week's obituary in *The Times* (written by his close friend and fellow wartime parachutist, Julian Amery), was foiled by Philby's treason. Although a splendid mixer, McLean naturally found the Commons a relatively dull place. In his pursuit of imperial interests he actually called for the assassination of the Communist-backed Congolese leader Patrice Lumumba. What cost him his seat in 1964 in Inverness was one of the least-known rearguard imperial actions of modern times.

In September 1962 republican rebels attacked the Sana's palace of the Imam of Yemen, with the promised support of President Nasser's Egyptian troops already sailing up the Red Sea. The CIA persuaded President Kennedy to back Nasser and the republicans. In December 1962 the Tory MP for Inverness flew to the Yemen. For the next five years McLean served as the Imam's principal military adviser in fighting the republicans and Nasser's troops in an unofficial British interlude between the American intervention in Vietnam and the Russians' in Afghanistan.

UPP

Cranley Onslow: refused to confirm or deny that he knows what MI6 is

A CONTEMPORARY ex-MI6 man who outlasted McLean was the tall, bald, rubber-faced Henry ('Bob') Kerby, the MP for Arundel and Shoreham from the 1954 by-election until his death in 1971. He was a fascinating example of a radical reactionary who had moved from the rightwing of the Liberals, where he was a pal of Edward Martell, to the imperial rightwing of the Tories.

But privately he was radical in his detestation of the Establishment — or 'kissing ring' as he liked to describe it — and particularly its corrupting honours system. Apart from his friends in the imperial rightwing, he found it easier to mix with the Labour left than with Establishment 'snobs' or with the pro-European 'Bow Group queers' as he dismissed the Heathmen. It was one of the greatest ironies that when the Soviet leaders Kruschchev and Bulganin visited Britain in the spring of 1956, his old enemy Ted Heath called on Kerby to introduce him and interpret for him.

He was an oddball in his Russophilism. Although his mother came from a wealthy Scots family, he was an outsider partly because he was born in Russia in 1914 where his father was an adviser on forestry to the Tsar. When the family were forced out by Revolution, they took with them Bob's nanny, with whom he spoke Russian for the rest of her long life. After he joined the regular Army in 1933, his facility with Russian made him a natural for transfer into intelligence. While the Soviet-Nazi pact was in place he was posted to Riga as an embassy attache, 1939-40, and then to Malmo, Sweden, 1940-41.

When the Russians were attacked, he was switched to operations with resistance movements behind the Nazi lines, particularly in Denmark (where he was jailed briefly) Poland and Yugoslavia. Although I knew which government decorated him, I was never able to get anything directly out of him about his MI6 exploits because, he repeatedly insisted, he would lose his pension if he blabbed.

Apart from his public rightwing clowning, which he did not take very seriously (even if his retired colonels in Arundel did), he was a deeply serious and patriotic intelligence man in his political operations, which were sometimes misunderstood. He was one of my sources for my 'scoop' on the Profumo affair. Like George (later Lord) Wigg, he was scandalised that a millionaire War Secretary from the Establishment 'kissing ring' should make himself so vulnerable through a 'tart'.

Other former spooks men have passed through the Commons more quietly, like dry, uptight Lieutenant Colonel John Cordeaux, a former Royal Marine who made virtually no impact as MP for Nottingham Central 1955-64. He hid his transfer into MI6 beneath the typical disguise of 'seconded to Foreign Office 1942-46'. But his decorations by the Dutch, the Danes and the Norwegians immediately after the war showed where he had operated.

The older generation of spooks did not have the recently-granted discretion of blabbing to Chapman Pincher and Nigel West (alias Rupert Allason, the Tory Candidate for Torbay) with selective impunity. □

Andrew Roth served in US Naval Intelligence 1941-45 and is editor of Parliamentary Profiles.

'And ever more came out of that same door wherein I went' . . .

This was the plaint of a man who could not escape the common round of conventional answers to his questions. Perhaps he was stuck in beliefs — maybe even sacred ones — but he was stuck. Is there no way out?

Perhaps; if you would like to see, write to:

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P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

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'The girl in question' — life in MI5

The international spectacle of the British government trying to silence some of its former secret servants could move next to Dublin — and an application to quash another memoir describing domestic operations

THE GIRL in question is Joan Miller, secretary to Maxwell Knight ('M'), wartime head of MI5. The book in question, *One Girl's War*, is her autobiography — the subject of repeated and ludicrous attempts at suppression by MI5.

These extracts, published prior to the book's publication on 30 November, are exclusive to the *New Statesman*. Our aim, in publishing them, is to demonstrate the futility of such suppression, in the week that the British government is desperately and disastrously trying to silence another ex-MI5 employee, Peter Wright.

As we go to press, the British government is deciding whether to try to obtain an injunction in the Irish courts against the book's publication by an Irish publishing house, Brandon Book Publishers Ltd. As our extracts show, another attempt to seek an injunction in courts where the British government is not accorded its accustomed deference would not merely be as ill-advised as the current Australian imbroglio, it would also be as unjustified. The book is the work of an unabashed patriot; its revelations have been aired in books already published — their repetition could in no way damage national security.

The book's main points of interest are:

● **The claim that Maxwell Knight was homosexual — a trait that would normally have had him classified as a 'security risk'.**

'As I sat there watching this avowed opponent of homosexuality mince across the lawn, a number of things became clear to me . . . His tastes obviously inclined him in the direction of what, in a phrase not then current, is known as "rough trade". It was plain that he'd taken himself, that time, to the cinema tea room, instead of spending the afternoon with his wife in Oxford, in the hope of effecting a suitably scrubby pick-up.'

● **How Knight once destroyed a file detailing security queries about a colleague they had hired.**

'I knew that M was on the look-out for a suitable candidate to join our little office group . . . I thought I had found the right man (Richard Darwall, an old friend . . . just invalided out of action with the Royal Marines) . . . However, it turned out that Richard, had managed to get himself classified as a potentially disruptive character, appearing under this heading in the office files . . . solely on the account of his one-time friendship with a girl called Eve Andrews. Now Eve, as it happened, was an old friend of mine too, from my Elizabeth Arden days. I didn't for a moment take seriously the allegations against her.

' "Right," said M, his cigarette, as usual, hanging out of his mouth, "there's only one way to deal with this . . ." I didn't expect to see him tamper with the office files which I'd been taught to regard as inviolable. But there it was. He tore out the page which contained the Andrews/Darwell entry and replaced the file on the Registry shelf.'

● **Details of how MI5 ordered Miller to burgle the home of one Indian politician in London, Rajani Palme Dutt, and ingratiate herself with another, Krishna Menon, in search of incriminating evidence.**

'One call, intercepted by us, directed our attention to a deed box hidden under the bed of Rajani Palme Dutt, a well-known lawyer and CP member . . . The task of investigating this box and its contents were allocated to me. Knowing that the Dutts were away from home, we [Joan Miller and Guy Poston, another MI5 employee] made an unlawful entry into their terraced house not far from the Scrubs . . . we broke in safely and wasted no time in getting up the stairs and scrabbling about under the matrimonial bed for the locked box. Sitting on the linoleum covered floor of Palme Dutt's bedroom, I opened first the box and then the sealed envelope I found inside it, in the way I'd been taught.

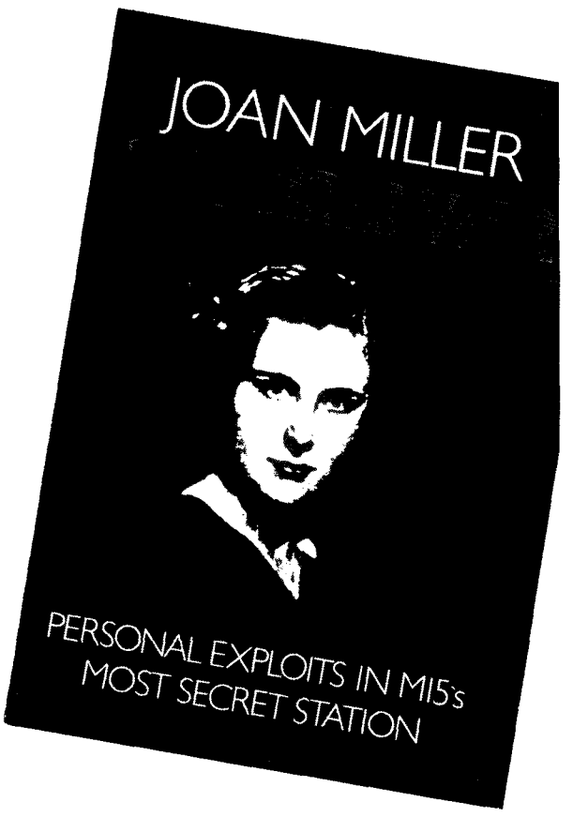
'We eagerly pored over this important document — and then burst out laughing. "All this trouble, and what do we get?" Guy groaned. "A copy of the poor chap's marriage lines." '

Miller later relates how difficult she found it to get close to Krishna Menon: 'the way [he] ranted against the Empire was enough to discourage me from involving myself further in the business.'

THE QUESTION of Maxwell Knight's sexuality has already been aired in a biography — the significance of these, and other revelations by Miller is not that they infringe national security,

> ***'We made an unlawful entry into their terraced house . . . I opened first the box and then the sealed envelope I found inside it in the way I'd been taught'***

but they show the security service in an embarrassing light. That's why Admiral Ash *passed* the manuscript for publication in 1984 when he was in charge of the D Notice committee, but was then *overruled* by MI5. MI5 forced the then deputy Treasury solicitor, J.R. Bailey (now promoted), to threaten the original English publishers' Weidenfeld with prosecution, on the grounds that the manuscript 'included confidential material obtained by her in the course of her employment'.



Joan Miller's autobiography — the work of an unabashed patriot

This book is not the work of a hardened KGB zealot, rather the opposite — an embryo Sloane, Conservative to the core, enchanted by the world in which she found herself, and slightly embittered by the failure of her affair with Maxwell Knight. Witness her detached, and yet fascinated appraisal of another cause célèbre, Roger Hollis: 'When I read Chapman Pincher's interesting book, *Their Trade is Treachery*, I was greatly taken with the idea that Roger Hollis might, in fact, have been a Soviet agent — though there's plenty of evidence to the contrary, I couldn't help remembering how Hollis had been so dismissive of M's anti-communist reports.'

Joan Miller died two years ago. The publication of her memoirs is a tribute to the tenacity of her daughter and her publishers, Brandon Press. Today Brandon Press made this public statement: 'Over 500 copies of the book have been sold in Britain to date (Tuesday pm). And demand has been such that we have found it impossible to keep booksellers adequately supplied. However, despite rumours of an injunction, we are absolutely confident that we shall be able to continue to supply *One Girl's War* to the British book trade. The book is also available £8.95 + £1 p&p) from Brandon Press in Dingle, Ireland.' □

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Tax and feminism but no sex or violence

SARAH BENTON reports on the launch of a campaign to mobilise 2 million women at the next election

BRITAIN MAY HAVE no proper national women's organisation let alone political party to press for women's interests, but attempts to organise a political women's voice keep popping up in odd places. The latest is on the fourth floor in National Magazine House in Soho. From there, about 30 women, all young, slim and dressed in black, produce Britain's largest selling young women's monthly, *Cosmopolitan*. It sells 370,000 but is read by two million on its circuitous route round all the places where women sit and wait for their bodies to be tended to.

This month, they launched a mini-campaign 'to make sure that the issues which affect women are at the top of the political agenda no matter who wins the next election.' From a list of 19 issues compiled by Lesley Abdela, doyenne of parliamentary feminism, readers are asked to select the three most important. Parliamentary candidates will be asked to take the pledge to support them. They will be rewarded by publicity and a party in May.

Last Thursday in *Cosmo's* elegant and hygienic conference room earnest Ms Abdela, earnest Women's Lobby and stylish *Cosmo* discussed the campaign so far. All the parties had responded except a Cornish liberation group and the Communist Party. Ideology? asked Ms Abdela, who doggedly pursues unideological consensus. More a matter of incompetence implies *Cosmo* journalist Sharon Maxwell who has just won the Catherine Pakenham award. So far, issue 17 — help for carers — seemed to be topping the poll but tax and cervical cancer were making a strong showing. Plans on how to get in more replies and process them were pursued in an elegant and hygienic restaurant over Healthline savouries and Perrier water.

It's all very friendly, very gentle and, like Women's Lobby, rather modest. The Women's Lobby, set up last June out of frustration at getting parliament to take the UN Nairobi women's conference seriously, scented useful work and offered to help. They have only 80 members but are organising a day school on 13 December when extra copies of the questionnaire might be handed out. The school is a training day on 'how to lobby', the mysteries to be unravelled by Ruth Lister of Child Poverty Action, Jackie Drake and Lady Olga Maitland.

Perhaps Lady Olga was invited to brighten things up, but she seems rather an elementary mistake. Not only does she lobby for nuclear bombs for nuclear families, she doesn't even describe herself as a feminist. While the 300 Group, Women into Public Life Campaign, Women's Lobby and *Cosmo* all share a nervousness about party politics which verges on political paralysis, *Cosmo* is at least not afraid to describe itself as feminist.

Or at least the magazine's young, dressed-in-black-check, editor Linda Kelsey isn't. 'Our brief is to be non-party-political' she says. 'But we can get very political indeed where women are concerned. At the moment this comes out as more left than right.' It's hard to approach politics from the point of view of women's interest in good social services and not feel that 'Margaret Thatcher has done a disservice to women.' Carefully put. But: 'We are a feminist magazine. Feminism is now such an unpopular word but it's a word I categorically refuse to abandon.'

Like all the editors of women's magazines, she was invited to a meeting with love-my-wife-love-me Neil Kinnock. He has identified middle-class women under 35 as the group Labour most needs to attract. It has to be said that *Cosmo* woman, whose readers are precisely the needed middle-class 18-35 years olds, was not wholly convinced that Labour has 'a more genuine interest' in women than the other parties, though it has certainly 'wised up' on lip service.

The most raw spot which *Cosmo* has touched on so far is pornography. Sympathetic coverage of Clare Short's bill to ban page 3 girls drew an unprecedented hundred unsolicited letters of support from *Cosmo* readers. 'I'm not a prude but . . .' anger about sex and violence is running high. But the *Cosmo* poll doesn't mention sex or violence. Perhaps this is because Ms Abdela selected the issues from proposals made by political parties and very reputable women's organisations. It reads more like a list of straight EOC concerns which fit easily into the framework of what governments can and should do, than the demands of an angry women's movement.

Yet the belief that, for women, conquering the mechanics of political influence and status must be the priority stretches from these groups to Labour's Women's Action Committee. Anger about being excluded from political power runs deep and certainly crosses party boundaries.

There is consensus on many issues, says Ms Abdela; the differences are not over what, but how. When this is a difference between privatisation and public service the how is pretty insuperable. The unanswered question is why class is a far more powerful determinant of voting and governments than sex. Separatism has produced movements and ideas, not political parties or even membership organisations. Is this because class does determine where power lies, or lack of political courage among women? 'The greatest problem for women,' says Ms Kelsey wisely, 'is they are very afraid of not being liked.' At last, the secret of Mrs Thatcher's success. □

Copies of the questionnaire can be obtained from Cosmopolitan, *National Magazine House, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1.*

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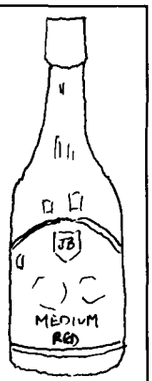

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MEDIA

'An unceasing campaign against a vital institution'

Robert Chesshyre

FOR THE FIRST time since the war, education is to be a central issue in a general election. Kenneth Baker, whose bland, adman exterior conceals Tebbitite tendencies, has already launched a two-pronged assault aimed at the public ignorance, fear and prejudice which cocoon our schools. He himself will occupy the moral high ground, lecturing us — as he did earlier this month, in erudite manner with quotations from Housman — on the decline of children's appreciation of Eng lit. Behind the scenes his henchmen have begun to urge his none-too-scrupulous allies in the tabloid press to step up the ever popular sport of bashing state education in Labour-controlled areas.

Baker is, of course, pushing at an open door. Popular papers for years have blamed teachers and schools for most of society's problems — crumbling economic performance, football hooliganism, inner city violence. And education authorities like Brent field teams exclusively comprised of own-goal specialists. Nonetheless, Baker must be gratified by the early results of the pre-election onslaught: race 'commissars' have been unearthed in Brent, and the *Daily Express* earlier this month produced a three-parter on 'the wrecking of our schools', comprised almost entirely of warmed over scraps. There is a growing corpus of comprehensive school horror stories, many of dubious veracity, which pop up regularly and with which we are set to become depressingly familiar in the next few months. If it were food the *Express* was peddling, its readers would be in severe danger of salmonella poisoning.

The centrepiece of their most recent effort is the touching story of one Myfanwy Robson, a 14-year-old north London schoolgirl who has supposedly launched a children's organisation, called CHOICE, to fight indoctrination in schools. 'It's we guinea pigs who'll end up on the streets,' she said somewhat ambiguously. The only drawback to the tale is that a few weeks earlier the Press Council had condemned an article on the same school, which used much the same material, as, inter alia, 'significantly inaccurate . . . seriously misleading . . . inadequately researched . . . exaggerated the degree of parental concern . . . gave an unbalanced account . . . unacceptably sensational.' Which, by Press Council standards, is saying something.

But to the students of the genre, there is nothing exceptional about the Myfanwy hype, the several thousands words in similar vein that accompanied it over three days under such headlines as 'Rape of the Innocent Minds', or about the Cummings cartoon that illustrated the final instalment. The caption to this read: 'The pupil who confessed he could read and write in a left-wing controlled school'. Teachers wearing hammer and sickle, CND and gay badges are shown falling about, while posters on the wall depicted Adam and Eve as homosexuals, Stalin as God and Mrs Thatcher as a devil. Subtle it wasn't.

I RECENTLY had to read everything that had been written in the press about comprehensives over the past few years. There was virtually nothing positive in the tabloids. If there has been good news about state schools, it has been missed by the eagle-eyed editors of our popular press. 'All-in Disaster' (*Sun*); 'The Scandal of our Comprehensives' (an earlier *Express* effort, which is held as a prize example of twisted reporting by the Centre for the Study of Comprehensive Schools in York); 'Are Schools Turning Out a Load of Thickheads?' (*Sun*).

The selection of material is outrageous: tiny right-wing pressure groups are inevitably dubbed 'influential', with no clue to the unsuspecting reader of their political bias. And evidence is simply stood on its head. In a little box headlined 'The O-level failures', the *Express* reported: 'Conclusion: 18 years of all-in schooling has helped an extra five per cent of children achieve good exam results'. In other hands that might even be accounted a success. While gathering material for this spread, the *Express* had notched up an earlier Press Council condemnation, for posing a reporter as a parent and for 'substantial' inaccuracies about a Wakefield school. Editors must wear such censure like battle honours.

The notional reader from Mars would never guess that over 90 per cent of the readers of these papers send their children to comprehensive schools, or that the system includes any schools in which teachers simply get on with the task of imparting knowledge and skills in a well-ordered atmosphere. The *Express* (again) this month under the headline 'Terrifying Violence of the Blackboard Jungle' reported (unsurprisingly) that infant and junior school children indulged in 'violent temper tantrums, spitting, stealing, throwing books'.

The partiality of this reporting is only explicable in political terms. Some comprehensives are deeply flawed, though in many cases it is as sensible to blame them for their problems as it would be to blame hospitals for road accidents. But it is their potential for success rather than failure that alarms the popular press. John Tomlinson, professor of education at Warwick University, pointed out: 'The comprehensive ideal runs against the grain of our national traditions and philosophy. They are attempting to treat people of differing abilities according to their needs in a common community, while society is hierarchical and divided'.

It is those divisions of class and wealth that popular papers glory in — the doings of the socially superior. A few years ago a then William Hickey said to the *Express* education correspondent, who was trying to interest him in a comprehensive school story: 'I don't think that William Hickey knows what a comprehensive school is'.

Ian Pearce, the deputy head of a London comprehensive and now on secondment to the Centre for the Study of Comprehensives, has analysed some of the techniques employed. An offending paper will select stark images from an untypical school — usually a progressive one in an area of massive deprivation — which can be made to justify punchy headline words like 'Zombie' and 'crisis', and present those as a national picture.

The result of this selective coverage is a kind of schizophrenia in most parents' minds. Stopped by a pollster, they will denigrate comprehensives like an *Express* leader writer in full flight: asked about the one school they know, where their children go, they'll usually be very supportive.

Teachers are bruised and bewildered to a point at which they now resist reporters coming into their schools. One education correspondent to whom I spoke has given up trying to get in. Teachers see themselves as scapegoats. 'When do you hear a teacher swear? Do you think we don't want to teach the three Rs? Do we encourage scruffy dressing?' one particularly smart teacher asked me at the end of a week I recently spent in a comprehensive. Another wrote to me: 'One could speculate on the many reasons for this unceasing campaign against such a vital institution which deserves the support of everyone in society, but perhaps the most important one, in the present political climate, is that of simplistic dogma'.

I talked to several education reporters, some of whom wished to remain anonymous for fear of retribution from editors, about this phenomenon. Bruce Kemble, now of the *Sunday Times* and formerly a long-time *Express* correspondent, said: 'In 25 years in Fleet Street, I have never heard an editor say "go out and get the buggers."' He did confess (when on the *Sun*) to once giving his paper what he thought they wanted — and was somewhat surprised (and pleased) to find that the piece wasn't run because it lacked evidence. He complained that schools don't advertise the good news, often for ideological reasons, making it hard for reporters on papers that live on news to get positive material published.

Another reporter, who had no experience of education — except his own — before taking the job, said he had constantly to think along the political lines of his paper, which was heavily influenced both by executives who had been educated privately or at grammar schools and by readers who wrote in complaining about standards. 'There is a big divide between serious papers, which cover nuances of policy, and us. Tabloids usually put a general reporter into education with a brief to get news stories in line with the policy of the paper. It doesn't have to be spelt out,' he said.

In the face of this, defenders of the system have a fight on their hands. We already have assisted places creaming yet more children from comprehensives. Baker's populist and massively harmful proposals for City Technology Colleges will remove yet more resources (particularly science and maths teachers) and able children. Papers which love to measure schools in exam terms will, therefore, no doubt soon have fresh evidence of 'declining standards' in comprehensives. Egged on by Baker and Tebbit, who publicly praised the *Express*'s latest distorted effort for its high standards, the pops are about to enjoy a field day. God help the morale of the schools and their teachers. □

Robert Chesshyre is a staff journalist with the Observer.

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Detente by the people, for the people . . .

The Western European peace movements are shaking off the deployment blues and heading in new directions, reports **JANE DIBBLIN**

IN THE autumn of 1983 five million people took to the streets of Western Europe and North America, in what the *New York Times* described as an 'outpouring of peaceful protest'. In 15 countries there were major demonstrations — in the cases of Belgium and Norway the biggest in the country's history, in Britain the biggest since the suffragettes — demanding that the 'Euromissiles', cruise and Pershing II, should not be deployed.

Since then, the government of every country targeted for deployment — Britain, Belgium, West Germany, Italy and Holland — has accepted the missiles. The Belgian people were only told by Prime Minister Wilfried Martens of the government's decision two hours *after* the missiles were flown in.

It's now seven years since it was first proposed that these five Western European countries should take the new round of missiles as their 'contribution' to NATO. It was a catalyst for the revitalisation of old established peace movements, such as CND, and for the appearance of new groups in every deployment country. Unlike the heady days of 1983, those groups are no longer regularly making the headlines. Does this mean they are in decline, defeated by the arrival of the weapons of war, when so much hope and so many bodies had been thrown behind the campaign to stop them? And how can their success — or failure — be measured, now that even Holland, the last country to decide, has gone ahead with deployment?

In Holland, the blow to the peace movement was double-edged when the Labour Party (PvdA) lost the election earlier this year. The pattern is by now familiar: the movement was thrown into depression and exhaustive self-examination. One of Holland's major groups, the Inter-Church Peace Council (IKV), has been locked in internal battle over direction. IKV's International Secretary Wim Bartels explains: 'the argument was over whether to organise regular demos at the missile bases or to broaden our argument. The latter won'.

IKV has taken up the theory proposed by the British-based European Nuclear disarmament (END) when it was launched in 1980 and since developed by Mary Kaldor and Edward Thompson, among others. The Cold War is built on fear of The Other, they say, and both the USA and the Soviet Union perpetuate this fear of a powerful enemy to help control their own populations. The peace movement's answer is for ordinary people — rather than arms controllers and the like — from both sides of the Iron Curtain to establish contact and begin a dialogue gradually to replace fear with understanding.

Known as 'detente from below', this idea has been gaining ground, particularly since deployment. 'Although we still oppose the missiles, we can't afford to get stuck on that,' says Bartels. 'The arms race is a political, not a technological, problem and we need a political solution. We are convinced we could have won if we'd tackled in public what is behind the East-West confrontation.' IKV's approach is to try to put the Helsinki Agreement, with its 'three baskets' of demands — security, co-operation and human rights — onto the political agenda. Bartels admits that Helsinki is hardly a popular turn-on 'but what's getting people excited is their experience of twinning with Eastern European churches, youth groups, businesses . . .' he says.

DETENTE FROM below has come across a difficult stumbling block — the traditional co-opting of 'peace' in Central and Eastern Europe by official groups. Czech playwright Vaclav Havel told the 1985 European Nuclear Disarmament convention in Amsterdam:

> When we read western texts dealing with the issues of peace, we usually find in them some shadows and reasons for reticence . . . in our part of the world, the word peace has been drained of all content . . . it is not a distaste for peace, as such, it is a distaste for the pyramid of lies into which the word has been traditionally integrated . . .

Pyramid of lies

The independent peace movements have been tolerated to varying degrees by their governments until they overstep some seemingly arbitrary mark, or the political climate changes — deployment, for example, was reflected by a tightening up in Eastern Europe. In the GDR many small anti-militarist and women's peace groups found shelter under the umbrella of the Church in the early 80s but later faced increasing arrests and deportations. The Peace Group for Dialogue in Hungary was allowed to exist for several years, treading a delicate path between the official peace council and those seen as dissidents. Though there no longer seems to be that political space, the group has left its mark. 'I found that peace and disarmament were frequently the topics of discussion when people got together', says Mary Kaldor, who visited Hungary this autumn. In Czechoslovakia, peace talk continues under the auspices of the Jazz Section of the Musicians' Union, though as it has grown its members have also faced harassment.

What Havel termed 'problems of mutual perception' between independent thinkers in East and West are slowly being overcome by uncomfortably honest talking. Solidarity, in Poland, started out believing in the necessity of the western nuclear threat to protect its own freedom. It has since taken up disarmament and a new group, Peace and Freedom, has emerged.

AS THE Western European movements pondered over direction in the last year, two international events occurred which activists refer to time and time again as having provided an upsurge in sympathy for the movements and pushed them down new roads. The US bombing of Libya was followed by mass demonstrations, the biggest being in Italy where protestors at the cruise missile base in Sicily have long been warning that the missiles were placed there for use in the Middle East.

Second, public reaction to the nuclear cloud from Chernobyl drifting over Western Europe stimulated organisations such as British CND to take a much higher profile on nuclear power. It was a turning point for the West German movement, says Peter Findlay, lecturer in German at Portsmouth Polytechnic:

> The German movement is a fluid, at times protean, body, made up of loose coalitions of thousands of local groups, many of whom see themselves first and foremost as women's groups, ecology groups, church groups . . . Since the deployment of Pershing II they've been struggling to find a minimum consensus to carry on working together. But the diversity which sometimes hinders them, also means they reacted almost instantly — and dramatically — to Chernobyl.

Scientific predictions over deaths in West Germany from cancer following Chernobyl range from 6,000 to 60,000: the psychological impact on the population was far greater than in, say, Britain, and Findlay talks of reports in the German press of women having taken advice and decided to have an abortion in case of foetal damage from radiation. The Greens now have the SPD on the run in the next elections in January 1987 over their nuclear energy policies. The SPD has said it will phase out nuclear reactors in ten years, the Greens want them shut down immediately.

HEREIN lies the crux. Nuclear weapons — and more recently nuclear power — are now regarded as issues for public concern in a way they never have been before. The peace movement has changed the political agenda, but has it managed to translate shifts in public opinion into tangible changes at policy level? The first step has been taken; the polarisation of public opinion over the issue has 'shattered beyond repair the all-party Atlanticist consensus' which had lasted for 30 years, writes Edward Thompson (*The Heavy Dancers,* Merlin Press). Many major Western social democratic parties — West German, Danish, Dutch, Greek and British Labour Party — have moved from that consensus over the last seven years. The pressure for detente is seeping upwards. GDR premier Erich Honecker has recently negotiated terms for a nuclear weapons free zone and a more extensive chemical weapons free zone with the West German SPD. GDR watcher Barbara Einhorn calls it 'the most hopeful sign for a long time.' A poll earlier this month in *Spiegel* magazine showed 59 per cent of West Germans were 'not worried' about the threat from the East, compared with 40 per cent in 1981, confirming the moves towards detente.

Which is why this week as Neil Kinnock lectures on defence and foreign policy in the US, there is such agitation there. If a future Labour government were politely to ask the US to recall cruise missiles, it would not, in military terms, be such a big deal — there are sea-launched cruise missiles and Trident submarines in the Pacific. But with no consensus in other deployment countries the 'domino effect' could reach Holland, Belgium and West Germany. □

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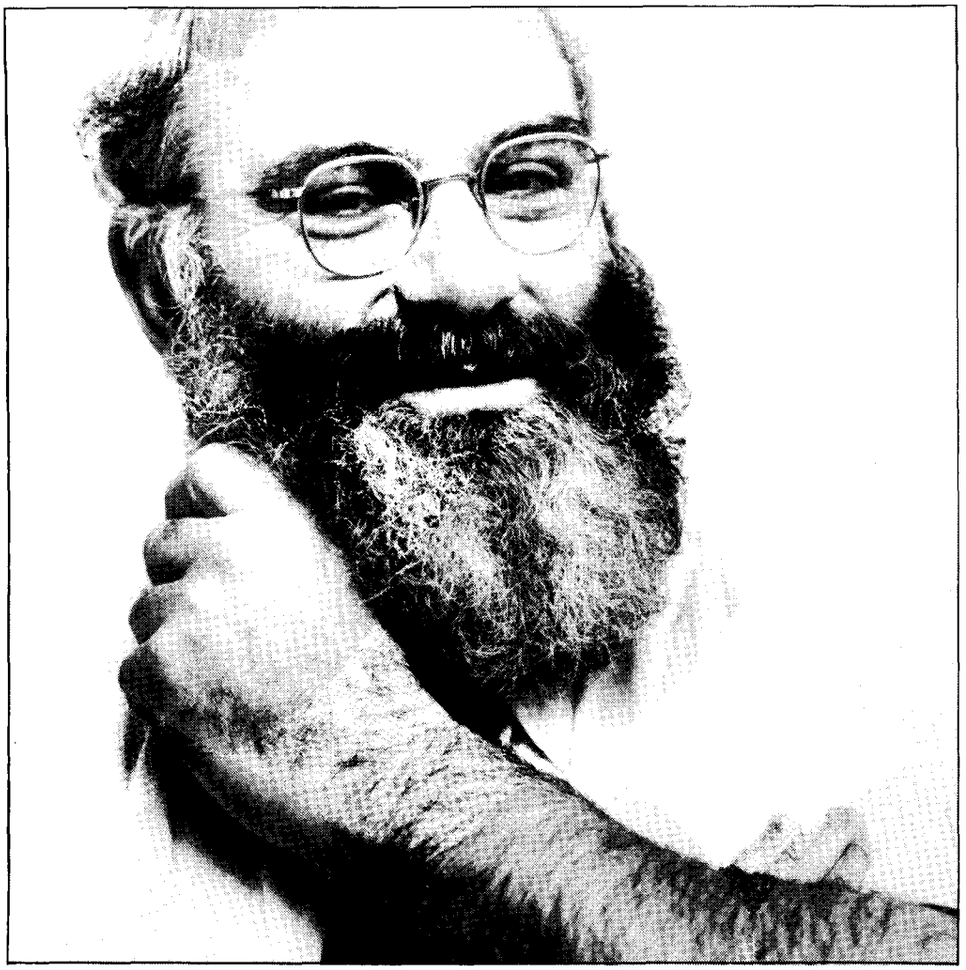

INTERVIEW

Oliver Sacks

OLIVER SACKS (above) is a clinical neurologist — but one who has taken his case histories close to short stories, or novels. A case study from his most recent collection, The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat, *has even been turned into a 'chamber opera' (see* NS *14 November for review) and recently had its premiere at the ICA. This approach isn't simply sensational; it is the expression of Sacks' belief that the technical and reductionist character of modern medicine and science is inadequate.*

His first essay into 'romantic science' was Awakenings *(1973), which dealt with the effect of the drug L-DOPA upon survivors of the great sleeping-sickness epidemic of the Twenties. In* A Leg to Stand On *the story was that of Sacks himself: he described the effect upon his sense of identity of a neurologically disruptive leg injury.*

The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat *ventures into the uncanny; the very fact of its scientific character intensifying the mysterious and paradoxical character of these special states of mind. In the case of Dr P. — who can describe an object such as a glove in the most sophisticated terms, but does not know what it is — Sacks finds a parallel with the condition of cognitive science: 'Our cognitive sciences are themselves suffering from an agnosia [inability to recognise objects by use of the senses] essentially similar to Dr P.'s. Dr P. may therefore serve as a warning and parable — of what happens to a science which eschews the judgemental, the particular, the personal, and becomes entirely abstract and computational.'*

Despite having been based in the United States for many years, Sacks retains his English accent and a slightly donnish diffidence. His speech is untidy and unpretentious; before the interview began, he indicated a preference for a controlled sort of free association. I launched in by asking him about human perception of God:

I don't think about a Supreme Being for myself, even though in a metaphorical way, because I can use no other words, I often talk about heaven and hell. I was at a concert on Sunday, and it was clear that Mozart's music comes straight from heaven, or rises to heaven, and there is some order above the human.

I certainly feel that Freud does an intense injustice to religiousness when he reduces it to cosmic projections of infantile neuroses and parent figures and so forth. He confesses somewhere or other that he's never met genuinely religious people: Jewish, Christian or anything else. I think that a first- or secondhand acquaintance with the religious would not have allowed this sort of reduction. I presume this was one of the reasons why Jung and others rushed into the gap, although I think it's a great pity that it wasn't someone more intelligent than Jung and less of a quack than the benighted son of a Swiss pastor. I mean, one wishes it had been someone like Kierkegaard.

I think the sense of awe, the sense of mystery is very elemental in human beings, and maybe it occurs in animals as well. I think this feeling of awe is very much needed for science as well as art. Einstein said — I can never quote exactly — 'The sense of the mysterious is the most beautiful thing we can know; it stands at the cradle of all true art and science and he who does not have it is as good as dead.' I think that sort of deadness is all too common now, and one sees it not simply in the scarcity of genuine religiousness, but in some ways in the deterioration of a lot of bland science and art.

Maybe there are different sorts of scientists. I sometimes think of scientists as divided into visionaries and engineers, meaning no disrespect to either, but complementary respect to both.

I had dinner with Francis Crick [Nobel prize winner for work on molecular biology] about three months ago — like sitting next to an intellectual nuclear pile. He was absolutely incandescent. I was throwing on clinical fuel and he was instantly turning it into scientific hypothesis. It was the most amazing thing. I've never encountered such a speed and drive of putting things together and making models, and I could easily see why it would fall to such a man to work out DNA. There at its highest development is the jigsaw, crossword, bridgebuilding, modelmaking sort of mind. But it seems to be different in feel from the sort of rather visionary mind of, say, Einstein, which seems to start with some vision of the whole, an almost metaphysical vision, and then the physics comes from that.

How do these two types of thinking interact in present-day neuroscience?

I think that, on the whole, present-day neuroscience often tends to be rather pedestrian . . . That's the wrong word. There's an enormous amount of engineering neuroscience of a very high quality, so that all sorts of mechanisms are being worked out. I think that there's also a level of much deeper questions which are being left alone at the moment, and which will need to come up soon.

I was fascinated seeing a man called Zeki at University College who has done some outstanding work on colour vision. I've been particularly interested in this because I've recently had occasion to see a patient who is an artist and who suddenly lost all colour vision as a result of a stroke. I don't have a systematic sort of a mind. I need a plight, a predicament, a human situation to kindle me and direct me on to more general things. So this patient's situation has made me think of the cerebral processing of colour. What does one mean by colour? I can't understand Zeki fully, but I perceive that he is thinking at a level unlike anything I've read about. I'm sure some totally new paradigms are going to be needed.

Perhaps you'd like to say a bit more about the completely colour-blind patient.

He wrote to me and said that he had suffered this sudden loss of colour vision, and that he had been to a dozen neurologists and ophthalmologists who either regarded him as a fake or who shrugged their shoulders. He'd been hypnotised and given sodium amytal, but this hadn't helped any, and there was now a feeling that this was organic and authentic. The way he

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described it was frightening. He was driving to his studio one crisp morning, and things seemed sort of misty and pale, and the police stopped him and told him he'd been through a couple of red lights and didn't he realise this? He said no he didn't. First they thought he was drunk, and then they thought he looked a bit pale and ill. He got to his studio, which was a place of the most brilliant colour — he was a sort of colour abstract artist — and all the colour had drained out . . . pale, washed-out grey or black and white things, and his life's work was sitting there meaningless for him. He was filled with horror and fear and despair. One can't imagine something like this. One of the things I try to deal with in the *Hat* book are things which are at the very edge of imagination. Can one imagine what it's like to be Dr P.? Can one imagine what it's like to have all meaning drained from the world? Can one imagine what it's like to have all colour drained from the world?

You say, well, there's black-and-white films and black-and-white television and things. One of the things this man says is that it's not like that, and this is not a good analogy. Black-and-white television may be a reasonable analogy for total retinal colour blindness, which is usually congenital and very rare, but it's not a good analogy for retinal colour blindness.

He was in despair, he didn't know how he would go on, how he could accept various commissions. He tried to paint by numbers: one could say to someone, give me yellow 540K on the Pantone scale, give me mauve 24H; one could specify one of a thousand tints. But this turned into a mess, and it didn't work, partly because not only could he not perceive colour, but he couldn't *imagine* colour. He knows and he doesn't know what red is like. This is typical of these cerebral things. Dr P. can not only not see a face, but he can also not imagine a face. Facehood, the idea of a face, and the idea of visual images and imagehood disappeared. It's as if he never had visual images; and with this artist, whose whole life had been spent in colour, it's as if he had never seen a colour.

He then turned to painting in black-and-white, and he's doing some amazing stuff now, very powerful, with a sense of contour and boundary and contrast and form and edge and depth and movement which he had never had before — so much so that some people are saying this is the most powerful art of his life. I'm fascinated by this sort of creative adaptation.

In The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat *you say that Dr P. had no body image, but had 'body music'. What does this mean?*

What put it in mind was sometimes he wouldn't recognise a student until the student moved. And he might recognise movements where he wouldn't recognise still photos. Certainly his own movement was fluent and proper — except, when he came to a stop, he came to a complete stop. I saw this happen when there was a knock at the door.

It's curious the phrase 'kinetic melody' has been used at least six times independently in the last 150 years by neurologists and biologists, each time in apparent ignorance of the fact that the phrase has been used by others. Harvey wrote a book on animal motion in 1627, the same year as he wrote about the heart and circulation. He had been to Galileo's lectures in Padua, and there's a wonderful Galileian analysis of movement in terms of impetus and momentum and couples, the first mechanical analysis that there'd ever been; there are even some intimations of feedback. Then he goes on to say in the second half that animals are not projectiles with impressed motion being impelled along; they're autonomous, and their motion spontaneous. The tone, the attitude and the language are completely different. He talks about the graceful quality of motion, the inspired quality of motion, and also he talks about the silent music of the body. This notion of all animal movement being articulated, as it were, musically seems to be an unavoidable thing, because you can find the metaphor three hundred years back. I think it also applies to much of experience and the way one sees the world. In a sort of way it seems that Dr P. had to musicalise his perceptions of himself and his perceptions of the outside world. Perhaps what all of us may do without being very aware of it was very conspicuous in him. He couldn't move unless he made a song of it. One's reminded of things like worksongs and nursery rhymes: 'One, two, buckle my shoe/Three, four, open the door.'

Have you made any mistakes like Dr P.? I bet you have. I did one a couple of weeks ago. I was writing a review on twins and the subject was very much in my mind and there, in the supermarket, I saw a splendid pair of twins with great shining heads. I drew closer in admiration and, as I got closer, I thought the heads were a bit too much, they were too large and shining, and I wondered if the twins had hydrocephalus. And then it seemed to me that the heads were slightly green, and I got closer still and saw that in fact these were two honeydew melons in a shopping cart, and I wondered if I was going the way of Dr P. I mentioned this to someone who was the father of twins, and he tells me he sometimes thinks his twins are melons, so maybe it works both ways.

I think sometimes in driving under difficult conditions — poor illumination, or when it's raining — there are shapes which loom up and you don't know what they are: it could be this, it could be that. Somehow, when driving is easy, there is such a confident, fluent judgment and perception you think everything is given. I think in fog and things you feel the working of the mind more clearly.

Your prescription for Dr P. is music, and you observe that his story is a parable for cognitive science, which suffers from a similar impairment of perception. What is your prescription for cognitive science?

First, I think one has to listen to the patient very very attentively and not put words into his mouth. The fullness of the experience must somehow be conveyed and not reduced. Description is something of a casualty in this century. Lots of people from Merleau-Ponty onwards go back again and again to 19th-century descriptions, which are so full and, in a way, so novelistic and so sympathetic. They're often without any theoretical spine or backing at all, but precisely that can mean that they're not limited. For example, with Parkinsonism — I quote this in *Awakenings* — the patient who found himself precipitated into a run as he was walking down a corridor. He came along to the nurse and said, 'There's a bloody great dip in the corridor,' and she said, 'You're mad, it's perfectly level.' This patient then said to me, 'A lot of what you call Parkinsonism is a response to perceived or imagined misperceptions.' Now, you can find this said in 1870: it's said in the first edition of Michael Foster's textbook of physiology. Later, when Parkinsonism is characterised as a movement disorder and purely motor, descriptions like this are implicitly disallowed. The doctors' ears are closed.

Presenting case histories outside ordinary scientific conventions poses its own problems, for instance in the reconstruction of dialogue. Is there a tendency to put words into patients' mouths?

When I was a resident in neurology, I wrote a number of articles within the canonical format, and that was fine. When I started to enter more deeply into the experiences and the world of patients, I found it more difficult to stay within this format. I found a greater need to do things biographically, so *Awakenings* really consists of 20 short biographies. It had become very difficult to report in the neurological literature a single case history. People would say we want a series, we want statistics. We want quantitative categories of one sort or another, you must measure rigidity on a one to seven scale. When I wrote an essay about Luria [the Russian neuropsychologist] and to my great delight and wonderment he replied, one of the things he spoke of was that he felt the sort of description which the great neurologists and psychiatrists of the nineteenth century had used was almost lost, and there was a tendency to replace qualitative description by quantitative things, and how the baby might be thrown out with the bathwater this way.

I have attempted with more or less success to convey what it's like for patients, Having said that, I sometimes use a tape recorder, I sometimes don't. I wish I either had a better memory for the exact words people used, or else the novelist's ability to create plausible dialogue. I used to have a sort of phonographic memory, and I remember once horrifying someone I knew by showing them something I'd written about a dinner party at their house. They said, 'What are you, a bloody tape recorder or a human being?' But now I've lost that tape recorder capacity.

I don't think that, at least consciously, I ever misrepresented a situation in essentials. It might have got heightened, and I might have given the patients my own way of speaking, although basically what they said was what they did say. I think that if you give a patients a chance to talk, they will articulate things with great accuracy, and often with poetry. I may have made them sound more cultivated or more English, but these are trivial things. Students would often be amazed by the way some of the patients spoke, but this was because they had never really met patients who had been encouraged to think about their conditions, and to articulate them. Even simple and uneducated patients can show remarkable turns of phrase.

Marek Kohn

Oliver Sacks' Migraine *is published by Duckworth and Pan.* A Leg to Stand On, Awakenings *and* The Man who Mistook his Wife for a Hat *are all published by Duckworth and Picador.*

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Books

Camera Press

IN CABINET

Honest confessions

Geoffrey Goodman

A Balance of Power
JIM PRIOR *Hamish Hamilton* £12.95

JIM PRIOR was the acceptable face of Thatcherism and it may yet be counted as Margaret Thatcher's principal electoral miscalculation that she failed to recognise the importance of retaining such a face in her Cabinet. She actually misjudged Prior. He is not so much a Tory 'wet' as a typical, middle-class Tory. He is very much the authentic voice of the middle-ground archetypal Conservative Party member who, for all his alleged wetness, would never be in danger of slipping into the Alliance let alone the Labour Party.

Prior was unlike the younger Harold Macmillan who in his pre-Middle Way period during the early 1930s actually considered joining the Labour Party. Jim Prior was not — and is not — *that* kind of Tory. He is not an intellectual political theorist but a practical man who was surprised to find himself selected as Conservative candidate for Lowestoft (a Labour seat) in 1959, unknown to Central Office in London, and even more amazed to win the seat from Labour in that Macmillan landslide win of 1959.

For all these reasons, and more, the-honest-confessions-of-Jim-Prior is the most important book to emerge so far from the pen of any former member of Margaret Thatcher's several Cabinets. Moreover it is exceptionally well written, fluent and palpably honest. There are few startling revelations and hardly any backroom 'secrets' but it is none the less a remarkably revealing mirror held up to the Thatcher government, and most particularly to the Prime Minister herself.

Prior's portrait of Margaret Thatcher is quite brilliant: the bossy Iron Lady, always with the veneer of certainty about her policies and views, yet perhaps by that very certainty concealing deeper anxieties which she fights, remorselessly, to keep to herself. Prior readily admits that he misjudged the lady's strength and determination. He accepts that at the time of her election as Tory leader in February 1975, when he was a candidate himself, he did not 'fully appreciate at first that she was the strong, determined leader which she subsequently turned out to be'. He continued to misjudge her strength and determination — and her capacity to sense the way public opinion was moving in her direction:

> Margaret had caught the new mood. She was more in tune with people than I was.
>
> Those of us in Cabinet who were out of sympathy with Margaret's views grossly under-estimated her absolute determination along with Geoffrey (Howe) and Keith (Joseph) to push through the new right wing policies. We also under-estimated enormously the change in the whole philosophy of the Right and the changes in the Conservative Party which were taking place.
>
> She was undoubtedly the most adept Prime Minister at handling the right-wing Press since the war.
>
> She had a marvellous press, they kept on her side right the way through in a way which no other Conservative government had experienced . . . I think Margaret was mistaken to hand out honours to so many working broadcasters and journalists and they were even more mistaken to accept. I cannot believe that it is good for a free and independent press or TV and radio service.

Strong, candid stuff. The closest Prior came to resigning was over Sir Geoffrey Howe's deflationary Budget of 1981. He told Howe as

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Prior has a good point about whelks

'YOU CAN'T sell rubbish, they don't come back — it's word-of-mouth'. What a lesson for politicians peddling policies. The wise sentiments are a whelk-stall holder's: Terry Andrews, aged 25, who for five years has been running the Exmouth Market London EC1 stall which has intermittently been on the same spot for 100 years.

Treasury ministers should indeed be sent off on day-releases running a whelk-stall in line with Prior's criticisms. From Thursday to Sunday they'd have to be up at 4.30am and knock off at 9pm. Terry does. Besides the stall, there's the trips to Billingsgate market to buy seafoods such as crabs. An expert eye for the product is needed. *Quality*, dear boys. The Sunday lunch pub trade in seafoods is picking up these days. Terry enterprisingly supplies it: looking for new markets.

The apparent 'amateurishness' of the street-stall seems to be what has made it the synonym of minimal business efficiency. Very misleading: not only do the wares have to look appetising like major industrial goods (or policies). Behind Terry's stall, supporting it, lie a van for transport; a workshop at St Pancras station for cleaning whelks, eels and mussels sent up from Norfolk by train; and mussel-beds in the Norfolk sea. A skilled trade, compared to Great George St. Off you go, Nigel!

Andrew Lumsden

Chancellor that the Budget proposals were 'awful and absolutely misjudged . . . far too restrictive, and . . . would add to unemployment. I couldn't say anything bad enough about it'. Yet he didn't resign because he was finally persuaded that such a gesture would make little impact on the government, nor on the mass of Tory MPs. Prior now says that he probably made the wrong decision and regrets not resigning, though he also concedes that he is not the stuff that real political rebels are made of.

As for the Treasury (then under Howe, or now under Lawson) Prior is scathing and contemptuous: 'Not a very impressive bunch' and with no real experience of life down on the farm or in the factory . . . couldn't run a 'whelk stall let alone a decent-sized company' etc. Howe in particular catches the Prior wrath — not least, it is interesting to learn, because Sir Geoffrey in the early days of the Thatcher Cabinet wanted Prior (then at the Department of Employment) to be much tougher with his first Employment Act. Prior ran into heated criticism from the right-wing of the Cabinet, who he believes inspired press ridicule of 'Pussy-foot Prior' for not tackling the unions more boldly and ruthlessly.

In fact it was the Prior Act, the first of the three pieces of Thatcherite legislation against the unions, which in the end proved to be the most effective in practice. After all it was that first Act which almost led to the break up of the TUC when the engineers and the electricians later chose to accept government money to finance their union ballots. It was also the Prior Act which laid the basis for the checks on secondary picketing and sympathetic action. From the Tory point of view it was far stronger medicine than the right-wing of the Cabinet appreciated at the time — and stronger than many union leaders realised in those early days of Thatcherism. In fact Jim Prior knew what he was about; and it was neither 'wet' politics nor weakness towards the unions.

Mrs Thatcher's great mistake may well turn out to be her failure to give Prior what he wanted on his return ticket after three years in Northern Ireland. Prior wanted the Department of Industry. Instead that job went to a series of political misfits, one way or another. But of course the 'misfits' were *her* men; *her* loyal lieutenants. There was no room for dissenters. There still isn't . . .

FREE VOTES

Winner takes all

Austin Mitchell

Proportional Misrepresentation: The case Against PR in Britain
PETER HAIN *Wildwood House* £15 & £5.95

THE CASE for electoral reform is that PR (proportional representation) is fairer, more equal, and freer than a first-past-the-post system out of adjustment with the social base on which it rests. Ours is government by party. Mrs Thatcher runs a 'party dictatorship' because the system gave her more seats on a falling vote — and an overhelming majority when over half the people voted against her. Can we defend that, just because it might be our turn next time?

On these counts PR should appeal to the party of freedom, fairness and equality. And to Peter Hain. It doesn't. The party sees first-past-the-post and the mandate as levers for socialism. Peter Hain preaches participatory democracy: MPs must be accountable to constituents and even more so to their local party. Rightly too.

Yet this is the view of an idealist outsider. Give me a list of Labour MPs who live in their constituencies and devote themselves to fulfilling local responsibilities, and I'll show you one of people who've disqualified themselves from the power and place game. Said he bitterly. Some terrible ideological gestures are made in the name of local autonomy. A party which eschews PR's potential virtue of forcing parties to make their candidates more attractive and representative should at least consider greater central influence in selections to promote more women, blacks, ability, or simple electoral appeal.

The problem with PR is its PR. The cause is over-enthusiastically propagated by a paranoid posse of fanatics with all the charm and appeal of a manic religious sect. No need for Peter Hain to waste much time on these system fetishists. He does, however, have a field day attacking the death-bed conversions of the SDP leadership and the messianic vision of the derring-do-doctor who now sees PR as the cure for every problem from halitosis to economic decline; a prescription for political harmony and Double-David as a way of life. In fact our British fault has been to be too sensitive to popular moods, too prone to give the people what they thought they wanted. This would be heightened by an electoral reform which weakens the potential for strong government to do what it should, but in practice doesn't. All easy meat. Hain stews it.

But doesn't rebut PR. I feared this book. I'm a comparatively recent, and fairly diffident, convert to PR. I supported the existing system when I thought it suited Labour's purposes. I shifted ground when I realised that it no longer does. Hence my anxiety that Peter would expose flaws in my argument. It was unnecessary. This is a rag-bag of a book. It asserts rather than proves. It makes inadequate use of overseas experience. It pays too little attention to the views of fellow socialists abroad who seem curiously wedded to PR.

Its conclusions are curious. It endorses the Single Transferable Vote for European elections, apparently because they don't matter. It opts for the Alternative Vote, *à l'Australienne*, for general elections. I wouldn't give an X let alone XXXX for AV. It gives no proportionality and allows minorities to operate vetoes. In Australia, Catholics in the DLP kept the ALP out for decades by casting their second preferences against it. Imagine, too, its effects in our next election. Support lost to the Tories will go to the Alliance. Where would their second preferences go? In that wide swathe of the south where we run in third place our vote will strengthen, but where will its second preferences go?

Who benefits is the essence of the argument. Peter Hain's party of firm socialist principles, committed to activist democracy, would not. So he's right to be against electoral reform and purity is a great comfort in opposition. He does, however, come to the real problem when he admits that 'if there is no return to a two party system, then the pressure for some sort of change in the voting system could become overwhelming'. First-past-the-post provided a firm base for strong governments. Those governments have not solved the nation's economic difficulties, they have compounded them. Now that failure has ushered in the politics of decline PR may allow us to cope better with its uncertainties.

We are no longer a two party system but not yet (and I hope never will be) a three party system. More a 2.26 system, with a level of third party voting far higher than in comparable nations with PR. There is a natural anti-Tory, and certainly anti-Thatcher, majority. It cannot be mobilised for practical purposes. Labour looks less like the natural, inevitable, alternative government than something of an underparty, rather like, but perhaps worse off than, the SPD in Germany. They used the stepping stone of coalition to govern and may well need it again. Without it we must moderate, trim and dilute to make ourselves acceptable, looking always, and primarily, at what will please the people rather than at what needs to be done.

We must fight to win. Yet supposing we don't? Should we look at the possibilities of PR to get power, as the French Socialists did to keep it? No deals must be our approach. The second election

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after a hung parliament is the prize. Yet supposing that, too, gives no result? Should we accept a referendum on PR as an indispensible means of putting together a government which can reverse the ravages of the last eight years? My answer to both questions is 'yes'. Others may have different answers but they all need to be given in the light of party priorities, not arcane arguments over electoral systems.

In my own view those priorities should be for power not purity. They could be for cutting the Alliance down to size by making electors evaluate it as a party of government rather than a nice bucket to spit into. They must be for mobilising that majority for care, concern and reconstruction, which is there, and for giving the electorate what they have, in fact, voted for.

This points to PR. So does a desire to give Labour voters, in those alien areas of the south where we come third, representation and a sense of purpose. PR makes parties get on with their real job of educating the people and building the vote, instead of waiting for turns in a lottery, or indulging in internal power struggles for control of the machine when the next, unearned, turn comes. Electoral reform won't build a new heaven or a new earth. It might allow us to start scratching soil with plough. That could be a more useful pastime than regurgitating stock prejudices in favour of an electoral system which has served Labour so ill in the last decade and a half. □

Austin Mitchell is Labour MP for Great Grimsby.

SOCIALISM

Ideas lacking

Robert Taylor

Making our Way
NEIL KINNOCK *Blackwell* £9.95 & £3.95

THIS IS Neil Kinnock's first book but unfortunately it reads like a collection of old speeches and Labour Party home affairs committee documents stitched together. In the preface he makes it clear that he believes democratic socialism is about 'the politics of production'. He swallowed this view when he was sixteen, arguing with old comrades in his home town of Tredegar. It remains his steadfast opinion today.

Kinnock is right to concentrate on the demise of manufacturing. His book mobilises the relevant facts over which there can be little dispute. But is that really enough? The problem lies in his analysis of how the British economy can be revived. The Labour leader seems to have no sense of history nor intellectual curiosity about new ideas. The starting point for any critique from the left must be an examination of where Labour governments went wrong in the sixties and seventies. But Kinnock devotes no space at all to this crucial problem. It is as if the awful Wilson years after 1966, when the Labour government was 'blown off course', never happened. The sorry tale of incomes policies — both coercive and voluntary — is omitted as well.

More serious, Kinnock passes far too lightly over the inadequate industrial strategies followed by his party during the period. As he writes: 'The constructive industrial policies introduced by successive Labour governments have been frustrated repeatedly by short-term financial problems, particularly associated with the balance of payments'. The Labour leader reminds the reader that he attacked Labour's decision to cut public expenditure at the Internatinal Monetary Fund's insistence in 1976 and the restrictions they imposed on the National Enterprise Board, the state holding company for mainly lame duck industries. And he goes on: 'I was acting then on an instinctive commitment to production, not with the knowledge we now have that the true economic and financial situation was far better than the figures then suggested'. Every Labour government has abandoned an early commitment to expansionary policies under the force of foreign exchange market pressures. Would it be any better under Kinnock?

His own prescription for industrial regeneration gives few grounds for optimism. It seems to consist of little more than a weary revival of old tripartite institutions — a souped-up National Economic Development Council; a British Enterprise board; a National Investment Bank; a National Economic Assessment with the employers and the unions. There is a sixties faith in the virtues of central planning that carries little conviction. Kinnock is quite right to stress the importance of training and education for an industrial revival. He has always taken a consistent interest in the subject, so it is a great pity that he does not devote more space to the crucial need for a dynamic labour market strategy. Moreover, he does not examine what other democratic socialist governments have tried to accomplish in office in other countries over recent years. He writes indelicately: 'The new socialist government in France went running for expansion and got mugged'. It must be extremely doubtful whether Kinnock in office could avoid a similar fate.

As so often in the history of the Labour Party insufficient attention is paid to the problems of finance capital for a socialist strategy. Kinnock shies away from a return to old style exchange controls. He seems to oppose Britain's entry into the European Monetary System as fiercely as Mrs Thatcher. Yet the party's financial policy could turn into the Achilles heel of the next Labour government. Certainly the sensible commitment to industrial regeneration will look rather hollow unless a radical strategy can be devised to contain the international tendencies of finance capital.

There are two other more familiar problems that Kinnock is also reluctant to discuss. No commitment by a Labour government to reduce the dole queues will carry much conviction unless it involves some kind of incomes policy that will cut Britain's high unit labour costs. The second problem is even more intractable for the Labour Party. The public service sector workers believe they have suffered from the fiscal stringencies of Thatcherism as their earnings have fallen behind relative to those working in private industry. The pressure for a big public sector wages push in the aftermath of a Labour election victory will be real enough. On one occasion Kinnock made it quite clear he would resist in government any sectionalist offensive designed to boost the wage packets of public service workers if it meant the sacrifice of Labour's commitment to help the unemployed back to work. In this book he should have spelt out that obvious truth loud and clear.

Many on the left will be saddened by this book. It has very little to say about socialism. The only theorist on parade is R. H. Tawney. There is no evidence in its pages of any recognition of the current debates about the role of markets in socialist strategy. The perennial tensions between equality and liberty remain unexplored. □

Robert Taylor is labour editor of the Observer.

GORBACHEV'S USSR

Do we help or hinder?

Alec Nove

Crisis in the Kremlin
RICHARD OWEN *Gollancz* £12.95
The Waking Giant
MARTIN WALKER *Michael Joseph* £14.95

GORBACHEV represents a new style, a new generation, new ways of tackling long-accumulated problems. Against him are arrayed the forces of inertia, in a society which is in many respects profoundly conservative. Can Gorbachev himself be described as a 'liberal'? How secure is his own political position? Has he sufficient support to push through long-needed reform of the economy and of society, to combat corruption at all levels, to instil efficiency and dynamism? How coherent and consistent is his own reform programme? What can the West do to help or to hinder its realisation?

And *should* the West help or hinder? In discussion with American colleagues I have found some hardliners challenging my own very different views: 'You say he wants to make the USSR more efficient. Sure he does. That will mean a more efficient and so a more dangerous enemy'. Obviously such persons would prefer the USSR to be led by an incompetent geriatric. They would also oppose any arms control agreement *because* it might help Gorbachev to reform the economy.

All agree that Gorbachev is a highly intelligent, articulate man, who has already disposed of much dead wood. The media has become much more open, unpleasant events are no longer concealed. Theatre, cinema, books, are able to raise and discuss real social problems. Wide-ranging proposals for economic reform are given publicity. Gorbachev tours the country preaching *perestroika* (reconstruction) of methods and human attitudes, speaks repeatedly of local initiatives and democratisation. But, how much change there will really be, and what kind of reform can be realistically envisaged, given the continued domination of the Party and the heritage of the Russian autocratic tradition, remain open questions.

What can these two books tell us that helps us to understand what has been happening, and the likely outcome? Owen represented *The Times*, in Moscow, Walker represents the *Guardian*. Under Murdoch *The Times* has been taking a bleakly pro-Reagan line, only just stopping short (and then not

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always) of 'Empire of Evil' verbiage. That, however, is not the fault of its correspondents, and I had hoped that Owen would produce something of the quality of, say, Michael Binyon, one of his predecessors in Moscow. Alas, a disappointment awaits. His book is primarily about succession crises and power struggles, with little space devoted to Gorbachev and his dilemmas.

Even as such it is not satisfactory. Thus his picture of the politics of the war-communism period is a complete muddle. For example, Bukharin was not 'ranged against Trotsky' in the debate on militarisation of labour, he supported Trotsky. To call Zinoviev a 'liberal' is, frankly, absurd, and the Workers' opposition was about as 'liberal' as, say, Tony Mulhearn. He tells us later that 'three of Stalin's henchmen' survived the holocaust (the Purges): Beria, Malenkov and Khrushchev. Yet Molotov, Kaganovich, Mikoyan, Voroshilov, Zhdanov, were all at that date senior to the three he mentions. Numerous assertions are quite unsupported by evidence. Zhdanov is said to have favoured a degree of decentralisation, and Malenkov 'overturned his (Zhdanov's) policy on the administration of the economy'. Did he? Nor is there evidence that the fall of Podgorny was due to his support for Kosygin.

Some statements are simply wrong. It is not true that no grain figures were released in 1952, though they were wrong. It is not true that Stalin 'did not take part' in the 19th congress, though he spoke only very briefly. It is not true that Mikoyan 'fell' in 1955. Zaslavskaya's name is not Tamara, nor is Shepilov's Alexander.

Policy issues, choices, dilemmas, are seen throughout in a 'Kremlinological' context. In the chapter actually devoted to Gorbachev's Russia, Owen makes a number of percipient points, though with a tendency to stress the negative aspects of an admittedly highly complex situation. The system, he insists, 'is by nature corrupt, undynamic, bureaucratic . . . The Gorbachev generation is the Brezhnev generation with smarter suits, more up-to-date technology and smoother public relations, with an unchanged view of the outside world.' All this is faithfully reflected in *Times* editorials, which is why they make rather sad reading.

Walker's title implies that he agrees with Owen's characterisation of the situation which Gorbachev inherited. He is also well aware of the legacy of the past. In an excellent chapter entitled 'The return of history' he quotes with disapproval Gorbachev's denial (in his *Humanité* interview) that there was ever such a thing as 'Stalinism'. Yes, Walker is right, 'there was, and remains to this day, a hole where the nation's memory ought to be'. One can appreciate Gorbachev's motives: regime legitimacy might be shaken if one spoke too openly of the fact that its leader during a key period of its history had been a murderous tyrant.

Yet the effect of this silence is to understate the extent of the changes that have in fact occurred, lending unintentional support to those in America, and at *The Times*, who say that nothing fundamental has changed. I agree with Walker that, without greater frankness about Stalinism, 'Gorbachev's hopes of a brave new Soviet future will be built on so much spiritual sand'. He needs the support of the progressive intelligentsia, yet they are slapped in the face when the laudatory articles appear on the anniversary of the birth of that notorious enemy of culture, Zhdanov.

Meanwhile *Novyi mir* prints a remarkable piece by Yevtushenko, which mentions Kolyma and even refers to the murder of Trotsky. He and others are emboldened to refer openly to the spectres of the past, the need to exorcise them. When so much is said on the need for 'openness', and where the defects of the present are being publicised with truly remarkable frankness, how long will history remain under wraps? I suspect — not for very long.

Gollancz

Like a 'holy man' of old Russia or the legendary 'fool' at a medieval court Yevtushenko, popular poet, speaks his mind under autocracy to an extent largely unrealised in the West

One criticism, however. Walker is usually meticulous in citing sources, but gives none for the statement that 'in the six years of the purges after 1935' 18,840,000 people were arrested, of which 7 million were shot in prison. What is the origin of these figures? If one adds the victims of famine in the villages, the human losses exceed substantially any plausible demographic computation for the 1930s. It is right to stress the scale and deep-lying evil effects of the Stalin terror. It is wrong to use implausible figures to illustrate these effects.

WALKER'S BOOK does not neglect the impact of personalities or the existence of political intrigues. But his emphasis is on change: in lifestyles, technology, aspirations, planning methods, the party, foreign policy, the KGB ('soft repression'). He also rightly stresses the many contradictions: the economy is in need of 'radical reform', indeed of 'revolutionary change' (these words frequently appear in the Soviet press), but there are formidable social and other practical obstacles to implementing the necessary changes. Walker has a good chapter on 'the sons of the elite'. Some have become corrupt, but many others have chosen intellectual professions, rather than following their fathers into the party bureaucracy.

The cultural situation is in some respects evolving favourably. Thus the former editor of *Novyi mir*, Vladimir Karpov, himself a one-time inmate of Gulag, has become head of the formerly drearily conservative Writers Union. *Pravda* has printed an article in which the author cites accusations that writers have been emphasising negative aspects of Soviet reality, and he comments that precisely this is their duty, if these are ever to be cured. The new head of Soviet cinema is also using a much-needed new broom, with open criticism of past censorship excesses. Gorbachev himself has invited social scientists to look seriously at the contradictions of Soviet society. Of course much is still amiss, but all this does suggest that Owen is wrong, that these are not just younger versions of Brezhnev with smarter suits and better PR.

Another good and highly critical chapter is entitled 'The women's lot'. Walker is (to my knowledge) the first to mention that no sanitary towels are available in the Soviet Union, which is but one example of the neglect of women's needs. He also cites a woman literary critic as saying that 'the only experience worse than an abortion is having a baby in a Soviet hospital'. He was able also to include a vivid chapter on Chernobyl and how the disaster was handled.

He ends with a most sensible and balanced discussion of 'the West's real interests and Realpolitik'. He asks: 'Do we yet comprehend the implications of the world's biggest and most resource-rich nation coming under new management?'. There seems no doubt that Gorbachev desires detente and is willing to make concessions to this end. I would have thought that it is not in our interest to have him fail, that the Weinberger-Perle policy of a speeded arms race is counter-productive as well as dangerous. It is far from clear why Gorbachev's Russia must be necessarily aggressive, or why they should not be as anxious as any sane person to avoid risks of a nuclear holocaust. They are surely also serious in trying to extricate themselves from Afghanistan.

Here again there is a dilemma for the West: should we facilitate this, or on the contrary add as much as we can to the cost of their operation by making withdrawal more difficult? I fear that it is the latter policy that most commends itself to Reagan's advisers. Just as they believe that an arms race in space would either give America decisive superiority or cause grave difficulties within the USSR if it tries to match the Star Wars programme. But whatever one's views of the appropriate Western attitude, there can be no doubt that Martin Walker's book can be strongly recommended as a balanced and imaginative interpretation of a society on the move. □

DETENTE — a Journal of East-West Relations. Available from Ann Hegelson, Centre for Russian and East European Studies, University of Birmingham, PO Box 363, Birmingham B15 2TT, price £1.75 (inc. p&p); or from Central Books, 14 Leather-market, London SE1.

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BOOKS! Advertisement by Alexander Rodchenko, 1925, from S. O. Khan-Magomedor's encyclopaedic and beautifully illustrated study, *Rodchenko: The Complete Works* (Thames & Hudson, £40)

Books of the year

Contributors come clean about the books they've most enjoyed in 1986

Adrianne Blue

Fay Weldon is a major writer; the ease of reading her confuses some. **The Shrapnel Academy** (Hodder, £8.95) is a grim, funny parable of our time. Upstairs, snowbound houseguests of the military-industrial persuasion provoke Downstairs (who are mad as hatters) to hilariously vicious deeds. **The Essential Hemingway** (Granada, £2.95) dislodged my recollection that Papa could write but not think: exquisite prose; often intelligent; always conveying more than genteel emotion.

Nick Kimberley

Kathy Acker's **Don Quixote** (Paladin, £2.95) confirms her as today's sharpest novelist on sexuality. As controversy in the *NS* made clear, her writing is now more powerfully shocking (as it should be) than ever. Going back 50 years, Tom Kromer's **Waiting for Nothing** (University of Georgia, £8.95) is a moving novel of life on the bum in Thirties America. Its stylised prose (first person, present tense) adds a poetic, which is *not* to say prettified, dimension.

Oliver Harris

The idea of William Burroughs in Christmas stockings is almost as provoking as **The Adding Machine** (Calder, £10.95), his collected essays. Paradoxical and bitter-sweet as ever, Burroughs remains the most interesting, if not also the greatest American writer. Again from Calder, Sadegh Hedayat's Persian masterpiece of poetic morbidity, **The Blind Owl** (£4.95), conjures an opiate twilight world of relentless and menacing *déjà-vu*. Simply stunning: a really dark diamond.

Naomi Mitchison

I was struck hardest by the reprint (Picador, £3.95) of Catherine Caufield's coldly, accurately related **In the Rain Forest**. The holocaust continues, destroying globally important natural resources, including people, all round the tropics where the great rain-forests have existed for thousands, perhaps millions of years. They are being destroyed systematically by the deaf and blind big business of the civilised world. Damming for power, cutting for timber and pulp, clearing for beef cattle and, incidentally, killing the forest people, quickly or slowly, worst in the Amazon basin. Brilliantly set down.

Alison Hennegan

Jerry White's **The Worst Street in North London** (RKP/History Workshop, £8.95) for a haunting and vivid social history spanning the 1880s to 1950s. Lionel Rose's **Massacre of the Innocents: Infanticide in Great Britain 1800-1939** (RKP, £16.95), chilling contents, humane and intelligent treatment unselfconsciously informed by feminism. Jeanne Mackenzie's **The Children of the Souls** (Chatto, £14.95), delineating a complex friendship network destroyed by the Great War and explaining, at last, *why* Diana Cooper was, rightly, so deeply loved in her youth. Ellen Galford's second novel, **The Fires of Bride** (Women's Press, £8.95 & £4.95), for exuberantly inventive virtuosity.

Alison Fell

No one writes about love like Marguerite Duras, and perhaps no one should. With great poise and perfection of tone, **The Lover** (Flamingo, £2.95), spirals through time to recreate the affair she had as a poor-white Saigon schoolgirl with a wealthy Chinese. The context of stifling colonialism and

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race hatred is riven enough for Romeo and Juliet, but Duras' lovers are no embattled innocents; instead, she shows us a love in all its ambiguity, corrupt and expedient, yet also boundless and absolute. An unsparing, breathtaking book.

Bill Greenwell

Urusula Bentley's hilarious **Private Accounts** (Secker, £9.95) is her long-awaited second novel; its deft, gentle caricature matches the exact timing of its Swiss setting. As brilliantly comic, but darker: Hilary Mantel's **Vacant Possession** (Chatto, £9.95). Both writers turn the stomach with refreshingly dangerous laughter. Reissued, updated, is Martha Gellhorn's **The Face Of War** (Virago, £4.95): eloquent, essential front-line reporting. For 3-5 year olds, snap up Tony Ross' **The Boy Who Cried Wolf** (Beaver, £1.95) — an old tale wickedly twisted.

Josephine Saxton

I know that Tom Robbins' **Jitterbug Perfume** (Bantam, £4.95) is full of inexcusable attitudes, hyperbolic excesses, and is a flimsy picaresque fantasy, but I enjoyed every scented word. I have forgotten it almost totally but I know I will savour its redolence again in the future. A hilarious book which goes too far on its own trip, and gets away with it. Yumm!

Angus Calder

What could be better value than the new Oxford Authors **Byron** (Oxford, £7.95): over 1,000 pages, including the whole of 'Juan', magisterially re-edited by Jerome McGann? It costs a quid more to purchase Stuart Hood's **A Storm from Paradise** (Carcanet, £8.95), but that too is a Best Buy, a powerful novel set just before World War One in the North East of Scotland, whence the great George Gordon sprang: a parochial schoolmaster tries and fails to meet the challenge to his values involved in a love affair with a Russian revolutionary woman.

Colin Greenland

Brainy twins and their computer meet a parthenogenetic talking rock from Mars that lives on nuclear waste. Hardly the most attractive or tractable of ideas, yet Christine Brooke-Rose's **Xorandor** (Carcanet, £8.95) is fresh, inquisitive, exciting metafiction. Problems of politics and power jostle with problems of narrative, no longer abstract when the narrators are two kids with piles of tapes and print-outs but no idea how to put a book together.

Richard Deveson

Undoubtedly the best 'new' novel I've read this year is Milan Kundera's **Life is Elsewhere** (Faber, £9.95), written in 1969 and on the Index of the sclerotic Prague authorities ever since. (The English translation, now revised, appeared in America in 1974.) Kundera's recent novels have become more enigmatic as they have become philosophically more ambitious. This one is clear as glass and bitterly comic on its subject of callow lyric idealism.

Maureen Duffy

Because I have spent this year writing a novel set in the Second World War most of my reading has been of books long out of print, but, having finished my own book, I read Marguerite Duras' autobiographical account of life in the last days of the German occupation of France — **La Douleur** (Collins, £8.95) — and was bowled over. It raises without overstatement all the particular moral ambiguities which we didn't have. Our war and its questions were different and therefore it's very important for us to consider what we would have felt and done in those very other circumstances. My second choice is the brilliant Alan Bennett play, **Kafka's Dick**. If you can't see it at the Royal Court, try to buy a copy.

Diana Eden

Unarguably, '86's profoundest fictions were the London Bus Timetables . . . However, Thurber's **The Years With Ross** (Hamish Hamilton) is a *factual* delight, not least for this exchange: Ross, legendary creator of the *New Yorker*, asked editor John Masher why he no longer *wrote*; Masher languidly replied, 'I have lost the slight fancy that sustained me.' Those words will be found engraved upon my heart and my suicide note. Merry Xmas readers.

David Edgar

David Stockman grew up in rural Michigan with a stern Protestant father of brutalist bent. For the rest of his life (thus far) little David has been on the lookout for substitute fathers, from Marxist professors to monetarist politicos. Finally, he picked on Ronald Reagan, but then the gipper let him down too. **The Triumph of Politics** (Bodley Head, £12.95) is the heartrending — and it must be said fascinating — result. The prose alone is worth the price.

Andrew Lumsden

The only just resistable temptation is to say *Jenny Lives with Eric and Martin*. From the same respectable publisher, though, my *Prix Homophilia 1986* goes to Michael Elliman and Frederick Roll for their **Pink Plaque Guide to London** (GMP, £6.95). Illustrated brief lives and associations with the capital of 100 celebrities who fancied a bit of the same, which is most encouraging for those of us who still do. Erasmus, Dame Lilian Barker, William Pitt Jnr, the Princesse de Polignac, you name them. Funny, surprising, beautifully presented.

Malcolm Imrie

For some reason, both the books I've found most useful concern the perfection of defensive systems, and both start with Vauban, Louis XIV's military engineer/architect. Joan DeJean's brilliantly allusive **Literary Fortifications** (Princeton, £24.60) situates the work of Rousseau, Laclos and Sade in an age of ubiquitous, machinic control and repression: impregnable texts. She often cites Paul Virilio, whose **Speed and Politics** (Semiotext(e), £3.95, dist. Central Books; pretty rough translation) extends the modern parallels her book suggests: the automation of deterrence, the silencing of enemies within. 'The entire city is made transparent, that is, familiar to the policeman's eye' as one official put it, in 1749.

John Spurling

Two novels and an art book, all published this year, all equally gripping. Le Carré's **A Perfect Spy** (Hodder, £9.95) and Paul Bailey's **Gabriel's Lament** (Cape, £9.95) are both centred on overpowering and magnificently comic fathers. In his invigorating exploration of **The Aesthetic Experience** (Yale, £27) the anthropologist Jacques Maquet ranges through the art of many cultures, eastern and western, ancient and modern, and argues persuasively that it's a medium not of message but contemplation.

Ben Okri

Three books have had profound effects on me this year. First, Christopher Okigbo's **Collected Poems** (Heinemann, £7.95), which are moving and unforgettable. Then there is James Baldwin's **Collected Essays** (Michael Joseph, £14.95). Full of anguish, they are unrelenting in their desire to heal. Finally there is Rilke's **Duino Elegies** (Norton, £4.95), which are masterly and life-changing. Probably the mot extraordinary poems I have read in years.

Gillian Wilce

I passed pleasant hours in B. Kojo Laing's Ghana — **Search Sweet Country** (Heinemann, £10.95) is an exceptional first novel, dancing, expansive, reflective, vital — was intrigued, fascinated and occasionally exasperated in Lawrence Durrell's Avignon — **Monsieur, Livia, Constance, Sebastian** and **Quinx** are all in Faber paperback — and chose to revisit the fantasy lands, with their psychic truths, of Ursula Le Guin's children's trilogy **The Wizard of Earthsea, The Tombs of Atuan** and **The Farthest Shore** (Penguin, £3.95).

Simon Frith

The book I most enjoyed this year was Geoffrey Wolff's **Providence** (Secker, £10.95). My understanding of the US class system and the mundane horrors of true capitalism is derived entirely from formula thrillers (much more materialist than the mannered 'dirty realists') and Wolff is an ambitious enough writer to make out of a clenched plot and obsessives' dialogue a bleak, claustrophobic poetry. *And* he gets all the rock references right.

Victoria Radin

O Vikram Seth forgive me, for
Your sonnet form is real contagious
To write of peaceniks, chess — what's more —
Yuppies! in tetrameter's outrageous
(Pentameter would be more fitting
But would one gulp it at one sitting?)
The Golden Gate (Faber, £9.95)
Is actually a novel, live
With social detail — fortune cookies,
Cats, singles' bars and lawyers,
Demos, children (no Tom Sawyers)
In San Francisco where the nookies
Swing both ways; and grief and death
Are sagely sussed — and movingly — by Seth.

Alan Brien

Initially suspicious of biographer as auto-biographer, I soon found Richard Holmes' **Footsteps** (Penguin, £3.95) an irresistible amalgam of essay, confession, short story, travel notes, history and psychoanalysis. We see Shelley not only plain but coloured along with Wordsworth, Claire Clairemont, Mary Wollstonecraft — figures in a landscape, in a

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dream, at the next table. Worth it for Gerard de Nerval alone, reading with candle on head, believing he is Napoleon, warning that visiting places ruins them.

Boyd Tonkin

This year I've read too many novels in the line of duty. Margaret Atwood's **The Handmaid's Tale** (Cape, £9.95) left by far the deepest scar. Not my 'favourite' book of 1986 in any sense; but the one I could have least done without. Never a likely Booker winner, scarcely a 'good read', but a dark dream of born-again America, scourged by slump and sexual epidemics, as it takes its revenge on women and its other 'others'. Like earlier nightmares of the future, it speaks not of when and if, but of here and now.

Mo Dodson

As a teacher in an art school I am asked nearly every day to define Postmodernism. Charles Jencks' **What Is Post-Modernism?** (Academy, £5.95) provides the most amusing, yet academically respectable answer to this question that I've yet read. From its false-marbled cover and glossy illustrations to its scholarly but carefully personalised text, the book itself is intentionally Postmodernist. The enjoyment it gave me almost persuaded me to abandon my long-standing aversion to the Postmodernist aesthetic.

Jules Lubbock

Ours is a Gothic not a Modern age; or, rather, the Gothic always was the truly Modern — the spinning jenny was neo-Gothic machinery, the factionalism of the left apes the ideological struggles of the Spiritual Franciscans. For 'Return of the Middle Ages' alone Umberto Eco's selected journalism, **Faith in Fakes** (Secker, £15), is immensely stimulating even for those who didn't finish *The Name of the Rose*, itself proof enough of our modern mediaeval passions.

Kim Newman

No book I have read this year has affected me quite as much as **Mythago Wood** (Grafton, £2.50) by Robert Holdstock. Set in Gloucestershire just after World War Two, it explores a vast tract of primal woodland inhabited by 'mythagos', folkloric archetypes created by our collective imaginings and compelled to live out their legends over and over again. It is a boldly original fantasy premise, worked through with just enough thoroughness to suggest the all-pervasive importance of myths but without damaging the essential mystery.

Charles Fox

Roughing-it vicariously has always been one of my indulgences. So, just as I have sledged across the Antarctic while in bed with a hot-water bottle, Jonathan Raban's **Coasting** (Collins Harvill, £10.95) enables me to negotiate Portland Race — less than a dozen miles from where I sit typing this — without quitting my armchair. Raban leaves his snug cabin to entice Larkin to a Lebanese restaurant; he even goes picketing. But the memorable writing mostly comes from that tussle with the sea-swell.

Roz Kaveney

Civilisation as the development of economic and cultural mechanisms, mingled with survivals of older styles of life and improbable foreshadowings of what is to come: if you are as interested as I am in fictions that talk about how societies and other human groups work you have to have some sort of yardstick. Fernand Braudel's **Civilisation and Capitalism 1500-1800** (Collins, 3 vols, £20 & £12.95 each) is not the newest of books, but certainly one of the most important of the decade.

Harriett Gilbert

Disguised as a slender collection of stories and autobiographical pieces, Marguerite Duras' **La Douleur** (Collins, £8.95) slips a serrated blade between your ribs and starts twisting. Ruthlessly searching for some kind of truth about the occupation/liberation of Paris (and, more widely, about betrayal, love, cruelty, fear) it spares neither readers, characters nor author. Disturbing, as knives in the stomach tend to be, but beautiful in the sense that Keats may have meant when he wrote about truth being beauty.

Hugo Williams

For a first-class read at half the price of the short-listed novel it might have become in the hands of a lesser man: **Acrimony**, by Michael Hofmann (Faber, £3.95). It's the story of a boy marooned in a foreign culture, ours, today, while remembering his own in Germany with almost as undeceived an eye. These poems stuck to my hand like a burn.

Grace Ingoldby

Still smitten by Irene Handl's **The Sioux** (Cape), a marvellously monstrous family saga, and by Russell Hoban's **Ridley Walker** (Picador), a story of groping post-nuclear reconstruction most remarkable for the appropriately stumbling, impoverished language in which its characters speak.

Glyn Hughes

William Gaddis' **Carpenter's Gothic** (Deutsch, £8.95). All the world's sores bleed through radio and telephone into a 'carpenter's gothic' house on the Hudson River. The inhabitants hold the universal junk-ideas of politics, religion and resentment, as provincial carpenters have pattern books to adapt grandiose conceptions. A novel which shows our wilful little lives as bizarre improvisations within what the big world allows us. Fast, deft, funny, and serious.

Andrew Clements

Gardening books appear in battalions nowadays, saturating a market that seems content to read the same advice again and again packaged in a variety of ways. Christopher Brickell's and Fay Sharman's **The Vanishing Garden** (John Murray, £15) is different: a compendium of plants that teeter on the brink of extinction in cultivation. It's full of tantalising rarities, presented in a style that mingles historical detail with practical commonsense and which should encourage any susceptible reader to join the National Council for the Preservation of Plants and Gardens without delay.

John Rentoul

If journalism is curiosity about what other people are like, then **The Gallup Survey of Britain** (Croom Helm, £19.95) provides instant gratification. Uruguayans are the most optimistic of 17 nations about the future; Germans and Japanese are the most pessimistic. Pessimism therefore equals productivity. More British men (39 per cent) than women (27 per cent) are sympathetic to the women's movement. Which only goes to show. You can almost read all the way through before you start asking 'so what?'

Naseem Khan

Notes on a Cowardly Lion (Methuen, £6.95) is more than a first-rate life by John Lahr of his famous father, Bert Lahr (the Lion of 'Oz'). It's also a wonderfully panoramic account, through Lahr's rise from poverty to acclaim, of the roots of American showbiz — burlesque, vaudeville (3-4,000 seat theatres to be filled with mikes), musical comedy: a tough and boisterous training ground for the magnificent talent that helped Lahr survive even a billing for *Godot* (he played Estragon) as 'the laugh sensation of two continents'.

Liz Heron

Leonardo Sciascia's **Sicilian Uncles** (Carcanet, £8.95) because it so brilliantly confirms the power of imaginative writing to illuminate the irreducible. In these four novellas history and politics are eloquently filtered through the perplexities of subjective experience, gathering the resonance of a century's hopes and betrayals. Other pleasures have come from **Mozart's Letters** (Constable, £4.95) and from **Voices of the Old Sea** (Penguin £2.95), Norman Lewis' poignantly beautiful memorial to a Spanish fishing village about to be changed forever by the advent of tourism.

Paul Allen

The travel-autobiography is a diffident, English hybrid. In **Between the Woods and the Water** (John Murray, £13.95) Patrick Leigh Fermor walks to Transylvania in the Thirties, a romantic exploration (he was 19) of a culture, graceful and poignant in hindsight. **Coasting** (Collins Harvill, £10.95) is more introspective: Jonathan Raban sailed round Britain to peer at the miners' strike, the Falklands and himself.

John Lucas

My favourite book of the year was Bruce Turner's **Hot Air, Cool Music** (Quartet, £8.95), which is funnier and I suspect even more truthful about the post-war British jazz scene than George Melly's *Owning Up*. Douglas Houston's first volume of poems, **With the Offal Eaters** (Bloodaxe, £4.95) finished second, beating by a short neck **In These Great Times: A Karl Kraus Reader** (Carcanet, £14.95).

Geoff Dyer

Much of this year's Tube travelling has been spent diving in and out of Walter Benjamin's **One Way Street** and Theodor Adorno's **Minima Moralia** (both Verso, £6.95), two collections of aphorisms and fragments that jolt you every couple of paragraphs with the power and originality of the intelligence coursing through them. Fiction: from some higher, purer realm of the imagination than anyone else seems to reach, Italo Calvino's **Invisible Cities** (Picador, £2.50).

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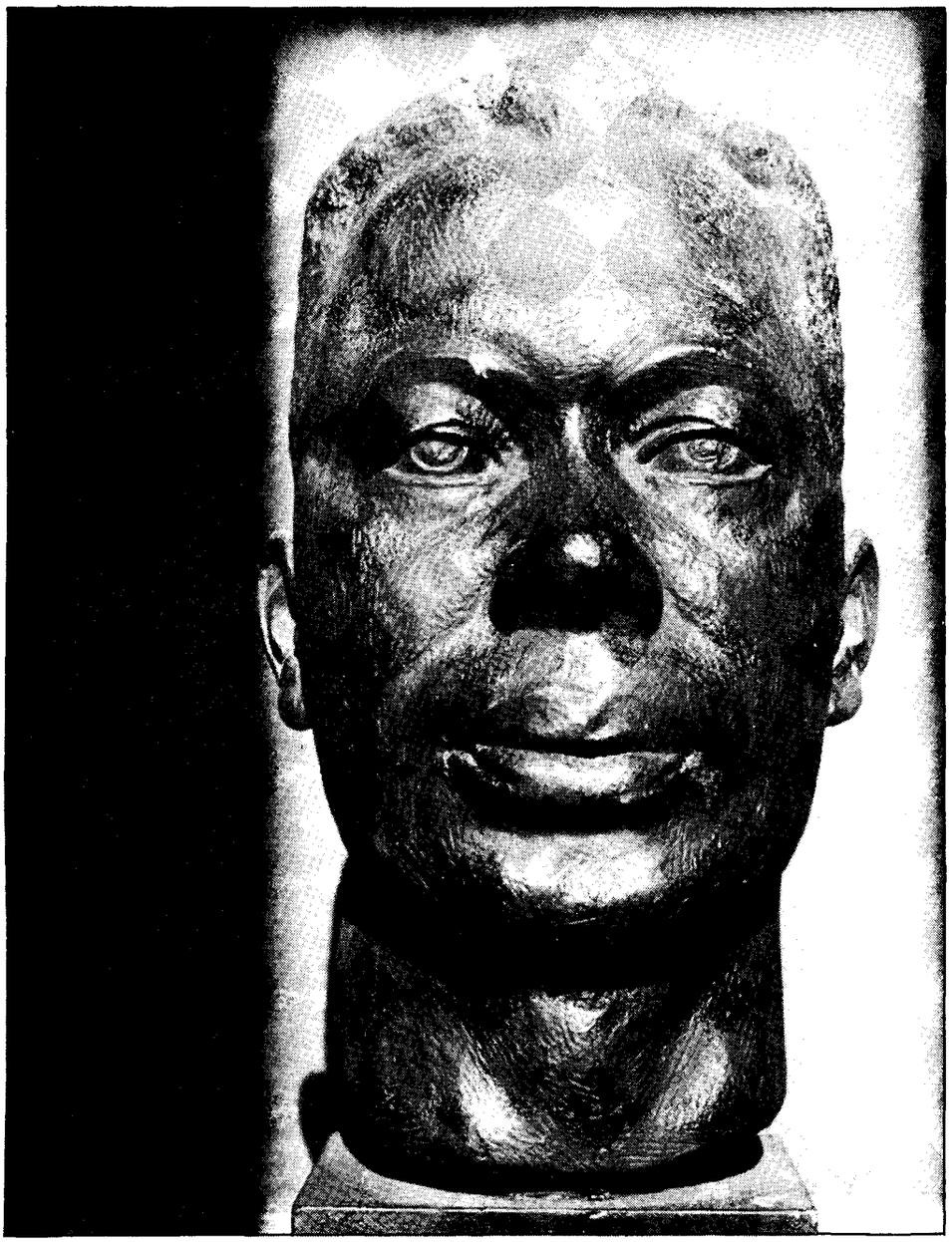

'Jim', by Selma Burke, 1939. From the collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York

FICTION

Making history

Paul Gilroy

The Chaneysville Incident
DAVID BRADLEY *Serpent's Tail* £11.95 & £5.95

THE EXPERIENCE of racial subordination has often been likened to living outside history. Slavery's suppression of temporal development and racism's capacity to represent blacks as 'people without a past' have bequeathed a distinct legacy to our storytellers. The best and most sensitive of them are prepared to confront a bitter obligation not just to validate black culture as a historical process, to restore to it the sense of being and belonging erased by slavery, but to bring blacks into history as active, cognitive beings — people who can think as well as feel.

A concern with history and the special importance of historical knowledge for blacks is at the centre of David Bradley's dazzling novel *The Chaneysville Incident*. This theme forms a vital link between him and the authors of the slave narratives, whose public acts of literary self-creation brought into being an expressive tradition and an interpretive community.

In a clever symbol for the syncretic processes which have shaped Afro-America, the book contrasts and eventually reconciles the two opposing modes of historical understanding which have formed its protagonist, Dr John Washington, a young black historian. One has been learnt by virtue of an elite education. The other is intuitive, a body of commonsense acquired organically in his relationship to old Jack, a rogue bootblack who tutors him in the ancient rituals of masculinity which surround hunting and drinking. The young academic's mastery of these timeless skills connects his contemporary experience directly to the obsessive, emancipatory visions of his bootlegger father and great-grandfather. Supplementing the neatly colour-coded file cards on which he writes the dry details of his forebears' lives, this second model of historical knowledge encourages him to be open to the African voices of the past still audible in the Pennsylvania mountains.

In what often reads like a historical thriller, Bradley invites his readers to share in Washington's uses of these contrasting philosophies of science in pursuit of the explanation for a sequence of mysterious deaths. Via the complex interplay between public and private histories, the young scholar is led not just to self-discovery but also to a more profound understanding of the nature of the historical process itself. An understanding which generates its own special form of power in the struggle to resist and overcome the effects of racial subordination and terror. For both Washington and Bradley, it would seem that authority and authenticity are fundamentally intertwined.

Employing a variety of genres and literary techniques with great skill, not as pastiche but for the substantive value of each differing register of address, Bradley brings this story to life at an extraordinary intensity. He manages an epic, multi-layered narrative across four generations, uses all the technical tricks of detective fiction and, in his 'racial' dialogues, invokes the special forms of black metacommunication as well as any of his distinguished predecessors.

He possesses a refined sense of Afro-America's own traditions of fiction writing and, though his protagonist retreats up into an attic rather than downwards into Ralph Ellison's cellar or Richard Wright's sewers, the motif of withdrawal without retreat is a sign that Bradley recognises his own literary heritage. Washington's withdrawal into historical study is, however, less a period of preparation for action than a recognition of the need to create new kinds of understanding, new notions of historical causality and memory. Bradley is suggesting that these tasks are in themselves valid.

Black writers inevitably work in the field between the poles of protest and affirmation. Recently, this tension has come to be seen crudely along gender lines: on one side, the womanist heirs of Zora Neale Hurston affirming the vitality of down-home folk cultures; on the other, the nihilist descendants of Richard Wright supposedly demanding the subordination of literary autonomy and communal sentiment to the imperatives of their macho social realism. We may protest that this caricature is largely an effect of the political economy of publishing black authors, but it is rapidly acquiring the status of critical orthodoxy. *The Chaneysville Incident* is therefore doubly welcome, because its scope, humour and brilliant insights confound such facile generalisation. Its literary elegance, grace and sheer depth make concrete the means by which this disabling polarity can be left behind forever. □

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TRAVEL

What we did on our holidays

Bill Greenwell

The Improbable Voyage
TRISTAN JONES *Bodley Head* £11.95
Fight the Wild Island
TED EDWARDS *John Murray* £11.95
In the Footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia
CHARLES BLACKMORE *Harrap* £9.95
Between the Woods and the Water
PATRICK LEIGH FERMOR *John Murray* £13.95
Coasting
JONATHAN RABAN *Collins* £10.95
Alone through China and Tibet
HELENA DRYSDALE *Constable* £9.95

A KNACKERING ADDICTION, travel writing. Here, lolling in an armchair, I've just yomped solo across Iceland; bumped camel-back around the Jordanian desert; buzzed anti-clockwise around China from Canton to Lhasa, to Kathmandu; idly boated around Britain. And then, to tucker me thoroughly, I've not only walked across the middle of pre-war Europe, I've even sailed the selfsame continent — yes, *sailed* it. In a trimaran.

Why do I do it? Why did they? Here am I, a presumably typical travel-reader, no nomad at all, eagerly following the observations of obsessives. Well, their answers first. Edwards and Jones did it partly for charity, partly for passion; Raban and Leigh-Fermor were, if differently, retracing their past; Blackmore was acting out a childhood fantasy — as was Drysdale, although her journey, less calculated, creates the most natural and straightforward narrative of the six. But why did *I* do it? Because They Were There, I suppose.

Each writer manages some brand of modesty. However dreadful an event, it is shrugged off with impressive flippancy. Even Jones, an impossibly bossy amputee, creates of himself something loveable. Testy, codgerish, easily riled, he spends **The Improbable Voyage** sticking his weatherbeaten fingers up at bureaucrats — your travel writer's favourite demon. They lie; mislead you; delay you; rob you; arrest you. As Jones and co. take their trimaran down Rhine and Danube to the Black Sea, he takes a masochistic delight in being harassed, especially by Rumanian authorities. He eventually smacks a Rumanian policeman 'right in his flabby jowls'; he delights in cunning ruses to outfox the lot. But he finally imposes his piratical manner too firmly on his material and his note 'Written in 28 days flat' is unsurprising. Should have taken longer; his speed has kept his narrative pitched too definitely in a single key.

This is also part-true of Edwards, who comes on in **Fight The Wild Island** — not a great title — too often as the bluff Lancastrian Lad. Fit? No, ale drinker; doesn't reckon training. Qualifications? Viking blood, obvious. Edwards plays up this rough, sentimental approach, and also depends on the traveller's familiar stand-by, the writer as wally. He films sensational scenes tromping across Iceland, presumably the first barmy enough to attempt the stunt, but forgets to remove his lens-cap. And so on. He features dire interludes of cobbled mythology ('And around the lands they placed the rolling oceans which were the sweat of his body', etc.) Nevertheless, his story has more immediacy, more pace, and the bloody-minded manner in which he stumbles across glaciers, up peaks and through freezing nights all make for a genuinely readable journey.

By contrast, Blackmore's **In The Footsteps of Lawrence of Arabia** is plain silly. He and three friends go vaguely off to the desert, rather haphazardly joining *bedu* to trace some of the author's hero's routes. True, they begin to laugh at their illusions; but they never seem to recover from the preference evinced by the locals for a Toyota. As for Lawrence — well, apart from mounting excitement at the prospect of meeting someone who met The Man (but he's at the doctor's in Amman), or seeing some actual train wreckage blown up by Lawrence (alas, sick camel causes detour), we're left only with Blackmore's dewy-eyed reflections, along the lines of 'Amazing to think T.E. was here'. The *bedu* guide is incidentally arrested when they return, an event most oddly glossed over in an afterword.

Leigh Fermor's **Between The Woods And The Water** — second stage of his reconstructed 1933 journey across the last remnants of imperial Europe — is of a different order. This is a really beguiling book, full of fantastic historical and literary by-ways, crammed with casual erudition. He can paint a landscape or sketch a character with as much skill as he can speculate on local etymology. His manner is droll, his concentration intense, his style interestingly busy. And he can tell a Szelker from a Dacian any day, not to mention give you Vlad the Impaler, a great ruler with one nasty habit when it came to captives.

Raban's book is as engagingly dilatory as its title implies, and structured with pleasant eccentricity. He gives us flashes of his 1982 trip round Britain in his boat, *Gosfield Maid*, his subject being more particularly himself on this occasion, with asides on English quirks. I must admit an addiction to Raban's style, but my judgment is that **Coasting** is the remains of a better book. It illustrates his continuing interest in mixed genres, but much energy has been dissipated, I suspect, by *Foreign Land*, the novel to emerge earlier from his trip. This new book was first sighted before the novel as a now-deleted introductory chapter in *Granta 10* (early 1984), a chapter with more force than here, and with the theme of alienation explored in *Foreign Land* to the fore. Raban may also have been hampered by the unplanned overlap with Theroux's *The Kingdom By The Sea* — which Raban freely admits niggled each writer.

Helens Drysdale, who is not always **Alone Through China And Tibet** — she has a lover until Beijing — is a new, young and highly accomplished travel writer. She follows her instincts and, despite an occasional habit of racing us across thousands of miles, mixes a good eye for detail of life in the new China with a strong sense of her own personality. Characteristically, she undervalues herself, but emerges as strong, resourceful. Her account of 'sky burial', the ancient Tibetan ritual of literally chopping up corpses for the birds, is harrowing but respectful. Here's one traveller with whom I look forward to sharing many more vicarious trips.

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BIOGRAPHY

Behind the mask

Nicholas Jacobs

Karl Kraus, Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna
EDWARD TIMMS *Yale* £20

THIS IS THAT RARE thing, a long book that would have benefitted from being longer. Karl Kraus, the Viennese satirist and poet, edited and largely wrote the monthly journal *Die Fackel* (*The Torch*) singlehanded from 1899 to 1936. The numerous quotations from it in this study of him up to the end of the First World War are delectable, and are almost always translated, often with great ingenuity. However there are a number of occasions when chapter and verse are given, without quotations, presumably because the book was mistakenly thought to be already long enough.

Kraus has come to be known in the English-speaking world as an angry one-man band — with the approximate ingredients of Swift, the best of *Private Eye* and *I. F. Stone's Weekly* — who, in his own words, 'put his world in quotation marks' and whose most famous aphorism was, 'Psychoanalysis is that mental illness of which it believes itself to be the cure.'

Vietnam.
Out of the jungles, into the courtroom

Agent Orange on Trial
Mass Toxic Disasters in the Courts
PETER H. SCHUCK

The Vietnam war ended ten years ago. Yet two million ex-soldiers contend that the dying didn't stop with the war but continue today due to the use of the herbicide Agent Orange. This book is a dramatic restaging of their unprecedented class action suit against the chemical industry, which resulted in the largest tort settlement in history.

Belknap £21.25 Hardback
248pp 0-674-01025-6

HARVARD
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One of the virtues of Edward Timms' study is that he shows how much more complex Kraus really was. Thus he distinguishes between the aggressive, misanthropic persona so successfully cultivated by Kraus, and the attractive, warm and surprisingly relaxed character behind it. In doing this he is able to explore Kraus's *development* as a satirist, so often taken for granted, and to throw essential light on the relationship between his private and public worlds.

Kraus's relationship to Freud was by no means a negative one, as is commonly believed. Timms shows how the two were allies, for instance in the fight for sexual englightenment, particularly in recognising female sexuality. Kraus attended Freud's lectures, corresponded with him and read him, and Timms argues that Kraus's apparently anti-psychoanalytic aphorism, besides being directed at a minor follower of Freud's, reveals a profound sense of what analyst and patient need at best to share.

One of the many revelations of this book is the influence on Kraus of John Ruskin. Kraus's hatred of the ornate buildings of Habsburg Vienna — often built after the demolition of less pretentious early buildings (hence his aphorism 'Vienna is now being demolished into a great city') — is often related to the architect Adolf Loos's condemnation of 'ornament as crime'. Timms explores this and finds a common source for the two men's attitude in Ruskin's *Seven Lamps of Architecture*, with its defence of functionalism and attacks on irrelevant ornamentation, and even shows how Kraus's emphasis on the disastrous cultural consequences of the debasement of language goes back to his reading of Ruskin.

Another, even more important influence was Oscar Wilde, seen immediately in Kraus's fondness for turning common phrases inside out, as in, 'It is never too early for young ladies to learn how babies don't come into the world.' But Timms digs deeper than this and illustrates how Kraus' consciously constructed aesthetic mask, the critical face with which he found himself best able to confront the world, probably goes back to his reading of Wilde at the turn of the century.

One of Kraus's all-pervading themes is the responsibility of the liberal press, the *journaille*, as he once referred to journalists, for the debasement of language and therefore civilisation. This press was largely dominated by Jews, and Kraus, being Jewish, cultivated a conservative aristocratic identification and sometimes indulged in an ugly anti-semitism, common symptom of an extreme assimilationism so essential for a satirist who, appearances to the contrary, must above all else be an insider. Timms is conscious of Kraus's lapses, and more than lapses, in this respect, and throws interesting light on his relations with that evil genius, the Wagnerian, proto-Hitlerite Englishman Houston Stewart Chamberlain.

Karl Kraus's greatest work, 'the submerged masterpiece of 20th century theatre', in Timms' words, was *The Last Days of Mankind*, the vast documentary-cum-satirical drama of the First World War. In exploring the origins and development of Kraus's anti-war views — which took much longer to develop than is generally thought and which seem, if anything, to have been sharpened against the grain of his initially conservative and pro-military position — Timms gives a fascinating insight into the birth of this long-neglected modern masterpiece which anticipated almost every formal innovation discovered since by the avant-garde theatre.

Timms' substantial book, the first of two volumes, gives the impression of having been turned over in the mind as a whole with great care. It is soundly constructed, with every consideration for the reader, and well executed. It is also satisifying to have the well-chosen illustrations placed precisely where they are needed in the text. □

FEMINISM

Reminiscing

Jenny Turner

Sea Changes: Culture and Feminism
CORA KAPLAN *Verso* £19.95 & £6.95

THE MOST IMMEDIATE way of explaining the feminism which emerges from this collection is to say it is older, wiser, accepting of contradiction and disappointment. The voice of a feminism after the 'marriage' with socialism has failed, no blame attributed to either side, the very form of the contract found immutable and wanting. It is also a professional voice, and herein lies its great strengths, but also its own immutable weakness.

At first sight, Kaplan's essays seem to cover already well-trodden ground. On the one hand, she's interested in writers like Christina Rossetti, Elizabeth Barrett and Emily Dickinson; on the other, feminist criticism, Wollstonecraft, Millett and more recent attempts to appropriate Freud and Freudianism. But the difference is that Kaplan has an argument, a useful one, which runs through the collection: this argument, which hinges on a reading of *The Thorn Birds*, is basically that Victorian fiction, modern pulp and most feminist theory in fact share the same premise and conclusion. All attempt to fix and protect a stable, ahistorical sense of female identity; all are in thrall to what Kaplan calls the 'Romantic theory of the subject'.

In the past, feminists have all too often got off with eliding historical questions of race and class by sneakily adding a prefix, *working-class* women, *Black* women, and so on. Kaplan actually goes quite a way towards subjecting race and class to the same sort of deconstruction which gender has been used to of late, demanding they be seen as discursive, not just economic or social categories. Her analysis of a strike as a complex text, in half a page or so, seems to me to make redundant all the tortuous political culture/cultural politics dialectics constructed by English culture critics hitherto. Theory is just semantics: in Kaplan's work there's a possibility of a genuine synthesis. The book moves vaguely from being critical to being constructive, and that in itself is a considerable advance.

But exactly *how* constructive? 'Reconstruction' is too materialist a term for Kaplan's as yet mumbled indications; 'reconstitution', by the time she is finished with it, takes on the Euro-numbered, additive-packed connotation of powdered soup.

Gender, race, class are 'unpacked' all right, but

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left all over the floor, and as happens when you panic about a mess, they're all quickly gathered up in a disappointingly ad hoc way. The working class, people of colour and women, according to Kaplan, all share the same problem: the dominant voice of Reason marginalises them as the seething masses of passion. Rather than strive to gain Reason, we oppressed should see ourselves as 'foregrounding the inherently unstable and split character of *all* human subjectivity'; for all our rigorous decenterings and mediations, then, we are left with what amounts to a slightly chastened humanism and a barely concealed reliance on boring old binary oppositions. I like Kaplan's drift, but it needs a great deal of application and rigour. A writer of her capability simply can't be allowed to go on tossing these observations at us then capitulating into a drippy description of her own transformations as having suffered a sea-change, into something rich and strange. How New Agey can you get? 'Suffering' implies a metaphysic: if we are not to assume one then Kaplan must plug up her cracks with something better.

If there were but space, or time, or money, or hope for such an enterprise. It is, as she notes, more than ironic that feminist criticism has become legitimate at precisely the time universities are closing their doors to new students; it is certainly true that socialist feminism is suffering from the collapse of Seventies' political debate. 'A cultural politics without a strong political culture behind it is condemned to reminisce,' she declares: given the contradictoriness of the movement she comes from, and its sad, sad state today, why is she so keen to explore her own development as critic? As if, to put it bluntly, her history and her involvement with ours were over, *achieved*?

'I like to use a rich, fruity prose, leavened and larded with wordplay and jokes . . . it's a way of making the hard, puritanical business of writing more libidinal and therefore more *mine*,' she confesses. The move from academicism to memoir is not a synthesis but a transgression, dipping in a toe then drawing back, rather proud of its daring, a manipulation not a subversion. Kaplan's wit is a *jouissant* wit, self-conscious, mandarin, taking pleasure in achievement rather than recognising what remains to be done. 'I'm still an ungrateful child,' she confesses; next book round, hopefully she'll leave her poor past alone and direct the disgruntlement at the future. □

POETRY

Art for heart's sake

John Lucas

The Incident Room
FLEUR ADCOCK *Oxford* £3.95
Acrimony
MICHAEL HOFMANN *Faber* £3.95
Idols
STEPHEN ROMER *Oxford* £3.95
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DENISE LEVERTOV HAS recently filed a complaint against the reluctance of English critics to give credit to the heart's due. We probably *are* a niggardly lot and nit-picking comes easier than whoops of joy for a flawed masterpiece, but the problem is not so much spotting the masterpiece as knowing what to *do* with all that heart. For isn't it in the end a demand that we take the writer seriously, not as a writer, but as a bleeding piece of flesh?

'Show me your wound,' Hemingway is said to have growled to a young acquaintance who claimed he was himself a novelist. At about the time of the remark Hemingway was writing *Across the River and into the Trees*; bearing a wound wasn't much good for *his* art. True, a very different artist, Gauguin, spoke of his work as coming from feelings 'which flow forth like lava from a volcano', but it's hardly that which occurs to you when you stand in front of his paintings. Still, it takes a king-size ego and probably the constitution of a spider to find yourself or your heart the most interesting thing you know. Or does it? I suppose any fool can find himself or herself interesting. But not any fool can write poetry.

Fleur Adcock, who is no fool, can. And when in **The Incident Book** she writes about herself, it is with a fine detachment, almost a comic ruthlessness, which entirely dispels sentimentality. It doesn't, however, prevent a certain feeling that we've been here before, especially in the sequence 'Schools', snapshots from a world of girlhood where the 'I' is a stranger and, if not afraid, then certainly puzzled and sometimes repelled by a world she never made. The deflationary, anti-romantic tone of these poems undoubtedly tells you that the girl is mother of the poet, but on the whole the incidents feel insufficiently important to deserve the amount of space they occupy.

'Witnesses' is a different and altogether superior matter. Having myself recently sat through a hearing in a magistrates' court where a man who did not deny half-murdering his wife was granted bail because, as the male-dominated court heard, he had reason to believe she might be conducting a lesbian affair, it is possible I may be overrating Adcock's poem. But I doubt it. Its laconic understatement of the plight of a woman in the witness box is as keen as it is exact: 'It's her small child who is at stake. His future hangs from these blackclad proceedings.'

> A man in a wig
> and black robes. Two other men
> in lesser wigs and gowns. More men
> in dark suits. We sit down together,
>
> shake the smoke from our hair, pass round
> more cigarettes (to be held carefully
> so as not to smirch our own meek versions
> of their clothing), and wait to be called.

'Meek' works perfectly there, because it catches that forlorn desire not to be thought of either as sexual objects or as challenging the man's world — as who can who waits to be called? Equally fine is 'The Keepsake', her memorial poem to Pete Laver, whose cruelly early death has prompted at least two other elegies, by William Scammell and Gevel Lindop. I intend no discredit to them when I say that Adcock's is easily the best. Other good poems include 'Accidents', the inimitable 'Personal Poem' and 'Excavations', a very sour love song.

Sour is a word you might well apply to **Acrimony**. Hofmann is *the* poet of or for Thatcher's England, with his hallucinatorily clear vision of the seediness of people and things, of 'salami breath', of a man 'with the meth-pink eyes/of a white rat', of a terrace whose 'faded spongy brick' is 'overpowered by the paintwork's/sweet dessert colours'. The gaze, blank and pitiless, so it feels, swivels from detail to detail, determinedly charmless, and then, in the second section, it comes to rest on 'My Father's House'. Father is a novelist: 'You gave me a copy of your second/with the dedication: *Michael,/something else for you to read.*/Your disparaging imperative/was too much resented for obedience . . ./You were a late starter at fiction.' I'm as impressed by the skill with which these lines are handled, each one leading to a new put-down, as I'm deterred by the remorselessness of it all. These are the chill fascinations of an Ian McEwan and, like him, Hofmann seems to me to come perilously close to kitsch on a number of occasions.

By comparison **Idols** is the work of a romantic. Part I of the volume is a sequence of poems about an unhappy love affair. Well, what else do young poets write about? (Not much, perhaps, but some do try.) Romer turns a neat couplet and sometimes, as in 'Evil Counsel', gets beyond the merely neat. But the second section of the book is better. Not that it's free of some woozy phrases: 'a lovely responding girl' for example qualifies for the Spender Afflatus Award, and to begin a poem with the line 'All week the skies have moved upon despair' is to risk losing your reader altogether.

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Yet the readiness to risk sentiment can pay off, as it does in a number of poems, including 'There We Have Been' and 'Wheels and Laws', whose last lines threaten to become merely poetry but succeed in being more than that: 'In deserts of the law, down a gauntlet/of narrow saints, unable to deny/nor yet confirm, my eyes were caught/by the flowering of the blue, where the sly/god sits in a spinning wheel of light.' As an exercise in reaching towards the more than phenomenal this has much to recommend it, though I don't see why we need to be prissily-pompously told that 'Only the stray/and spacious mind will ever notice it.' And who might have one of those, I wonder? Young men in favoured circumstances, perhaps?

Of the **Chatto New Poets** I particularly liked the title and opening of Jo Shapcott's 'Electroplating the baby': 'Of the Egyptians the rich alone/were capable of having it done./The cadavers were immersed/in antiputressible baths.' But then it gets prosy and awkward, though not as awkward as 'Late Snow' where, apparently, 'in Cambridge cricketers couldn't grip'. Still, not to be niggardly, I'll say that I enjoyed her poems, as I did those of Pippa Little and Lachlan Mackinnon. □

PAPERBACKS

The red and the blue

Liz Heron

THE SECOND WORLD WAR and the reforms that followed altered the class topography of Britain in more ways than those of us born since can imagine, though probably less profoundly than we think. If the awkwardness of transition to a greater social democratisation marks the Fifties, the Thirties show us the old class structure in crisis but still intact. Even on the upper-class left, egalitarianism was more a troubling abstract principle than a heartfelt hope. Miles Vane-Merrick, the young Labour MP in Vita Sackville-West's **Family History** (Virago, £3.95) 'loved the people, though he loathed and mistrusted democracy.' As an enlightened member of the landed gentry, whose vision is of a more decent and dignified relationship between the classes rather than their elimination, he sums up the Fabian spirit of the future as much as that of the illusory past.

First published in 1932, this story of a love affair doomed by conflicting social sensibilities sets a period stage furnished with revealing detail, though peopled largely with types rather than full-blooded characters. There's the crusty self-made patriarch, upstandingly disgusted with the monsters his money has created; there's his grandson and heir, sensitively at odds with the family's hunting and shooting values; there are the aristocratic intellectuals who discuss politics and feelings, and don't dress for dinner. Complexities are left to the pivotal figure of Evelyn Jarrold, the beautiful society widow finally broken by her affair with the younger Vane-Merrick. Intelligent but too trapped in the conventions of her class to welcome change, she becomes the despairing victim of her femininity and emotional dependence. This is a novel best appreciated for its bluntly convincing observation of manners and mores.

The same self-consciousness of period and class pervades Naomi Mitchison's **You May Well Ask** (Flamingo, £3.50), which also surveys the scene from the top of the heap, supplying with punctilious candour the details of life in the upper-class Mitchison household. Where Sackville-West's fictional picture is socially claustrophobic, this memoir of the inter-war years is all movement, travel and libertarian discovery, albeit from a secure base in a literary and intellectual milieu that included the likes of Forster and Auden, Aldous Huxley and Wyndham Lewis, as well as prominent Communists and Labour politicians.

Much was taken for granted — like the small army of servants — 'But at least we found ourselves living into a frame of mind where the class structure began to look very unreal.' While conveying the nuances of social decorum and domestic relationships, cataloguing the minutiae of food, drink, wardrobes and guest lists, Mitchison reflects as a socialist and feminist, and the fascination of it all lies in this intelligent running appraisal. The warmth and optimism of spirit that characterises her fictional explorations of historical change is here in abundance.

In **A Maggot** (Pan, £3.50) John Fowles pulls the reader into the flow of history, along an imaginary track of the 18th century where two quite different impulses to freedom assert themselves: the ungodly pursuit of knowledge through the extremes of aristocratic sexual libertinage and scientific enquiry, alongside the radical dissent of the disenfranchised, expressed in unorthodox millenarian religion. Fowles' achievement is to draw infinite small resonances from history, while measuring the chasms of thought and perception that separate then and now, and *A Maggot* is an absorbing and stimulating read. But the elliptical narrative, which moves quickly into an interrogative mode that forsakes the central enigma for the truths of the witnesses' interpretations, leaves too slight and fanciful a foundation for the weight of insights it must bear. Ultimately, this is a less satisfying, if more ambitious, book than the author's earlier investigation into past pathologies of sex, class and gender, *The French Lieutenant's Woman*.

First published in 1751, Eliza Haywood's **The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless** (Pandora, £5.95) relates a saga of female adventures with an archness typical of its period. This shrewd and lively novel's historical interest is enhanced by its author's notoriety as editor of the first periodical for women and as a scourge of the male literary establishment of her day. In making available this and other neglected 18th-century novels by women, Pandora performs a praiseworthy service. The claims made in the introduction for the originality of *Betsy*'s sexual and social themes do, however, rather wildly overlook Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, which precedes it by nearly 30 years.

Although born towards its end, Stendhal, as Cyril Connolly puts it, 'had imbibed from his grandfather (like George Sand) something of the rational art of happiness of the 18th-century.' Stendhal's sister Pauline also resembled George Sand, in her penchant for wearing men's clothes — as a disguise in which to snatch some male freedoms. His early correspondence with her, the most sustained and intimate in **To The Happy Few, Selected Letters of Stendhal** (Soho, £6.95) displays the cool pragmatism that underlay the romantic temperament, reflecting both the ardent advocate of female emancipation and the passionate believer in individual happiness. Brotherly concern for her education combined with advice to accept marriage as a better bet for the future than reckless single independence. In the end Pauline took it.

These letters and others to friends, lovers and literary contemporaries wonderfully distil something of a restless life of ideas and action that offers many keys to Stendhal's novels. And his laconic description of an exhausted army in retreat from the flames of Moscow is surely nowhere bettered for its chilly sense of being there.

Peter Fryer's vivid, urgent, eye-witness account of Hungary in 1956 is a testament to journalistic integrity, and raised far above the level of the ephemeral by the author's informed view of events and his incisive analysis of their political context. It was the *Daily Worker*'s censorship of his dispatches that led to the writing of **Hungarian Tragedy** (New Park, £2.95) and Peter Fryer's resignation from the paper after nine years on its staff.

It shows the uprising not as a right-wing attempt to restore capitalism, but as a democratic struggle against Stalinist oppression. As well as being a stark indictment of the past, it is also an enduring argument for the possibilities of genuine democracy. □

SPORT

Word games

Adrianne Blue

Sport and Politics: A World Divided
NEIL MACFARLANE *Collins* £12.95
Sport, Power and Culture
JOHN HARGREAVES *Polity Press* £25
All Work and No Play? The Sociology of Women and Leisure
ROSEMARY DEEM *Open University* £20 & £6.95
Foul Play: Drug Abuse in Sport
TOM DONOHOE & NEIL JOHNSON *Blackwell* £12.50
Fair Game: Myth and Reality in Sport
ERIC MIDWINTER *Allen & Unwin* £12.95
Guinness American Football
MILES AIKEN & PETER ROWE *Guinness Books* £7.95

THE PERILS OF office are much on the mind of the former Minister for Sport, but Neil Macfarlane does not dwell on his encounter with me. Shortly after his appointment, I was sent as a *Sunday Times kamikazi* to explore with the new Tory minister his attitude to recreational swimming. Stealthy investigative journalism had revealed that Macfarlane liked to go for a swim before work, necessarily before 8.30 a.m. when most public swimming-baths opened. How, I asked, did he manage it? He swam at a pricey members-only pool. Surely, I said, as Mine Editor had instructed me, those few citizens still gainfully but modestly employed ought to be able to emulate the minister.

Unabashed, Macfarlane muttered about limited government funds and paying one's own

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way. Charmingly and with intelligence, he deflected any notions that an unfit citizenry might grow flabby and wheezy, increasing NHS costs, all for want of changing opening time at the baths by an hour or two.

Sport and Politics is very like that encounter. Macfarlane shows an impressive ability to comprehend the facts and the issues — and then to set them aside when he draws his conclusions.

Of Zola Budd: 'I had no doubts that if she were to run for Britain in Los Angeles and if she were to win a gold medal . . . people would identify her as a South African running for this country.' Correct. But, 'There was a feeling, too, that the government was allowing itself to be swept along. Nevertheless, swept along it was.' Wrong. It was, of course, the government which made the running.

Despite some warmed-over, ex-official, self-justifying paragraphs lifted from Macfarlane's days as government centre-forward, *Sport and Politics* is an informed survey of what happened — but not why — in elite sport during Macfarlane's tenure. Macfarlane's collaborator, Michael Herd, the assistant editor of the *London Standard*, has fashioned a very readable account of a cataclysmic period — the 1980 boycott of the Olympics, the coming of Budd, the first injections of Big Money into athletics, and football's evolution into a blood sport.

John Hargreaves, his ex-wife sociologist Jennifer Hargreaves, whose forthcoming book it will be interesting to see, and Paul Willis have been developing a leftish perspective on the sociology of sport for a decade. Their inspiration has been the French writer Jean-Marie Brohm, who is mentioned here in a footnote. Brohm's marxist critique is sketchy.

Hargreave's book, **Sport, Power and Culture,** is dismayingly thorough: 'When we use the term power, we are referring not to an entity, the mere possession of which enables an individual or collective agent to dominate another, but to a relationship between agents, the outcome of which is determined by agents' access to relevant resources and their use of appropriate strategies in specific conditions of struggle with other agents . . . We reject, in particular, the common-sense notion that the exercise of power is to be equated with political acitivity as it is formally constituted . . .' Is it naughty to point out that here he seems to be agreeing with Neil Macfarlane that government is swept along?

Hargreaves examines the role of sport in 'accommodating the British working class to the social order', placing much of the blame for the 'achievement of hegemony' on the mass media. The latter surely is true, but it is not the new insight it is paraded as. In fact, many strawmen are knocked down in the book's analysis, but it is a useful compendium.

Rosemary Deem entered the field with a BA dissertation on the sociology of showjumping. In **All Work and No Play** she provides a short, convincing, to the point summary of the issues and the state of play in women's leisure: 'Sport, like leisure, has always been male-defined, for men and by men.' Power relations in the household and community and in sports organisations — '*not* biology' — have kept many women out of sport.

Many aren't allowed time for sport or any leisure, and when sport is taught to girls at school, it is often half-heartedly, in gender-segregated classes which convey the message of distinctions between male and female participation. Deems' also surveys the viable avenues of change in leisure provision.

Foul Play is a superb introduction to drug abuse in sport, from anabolic steroids to painkillers and anti-anxiety potions. The chapter on the female athlete is remarkably enlightened in questioning the sanctity of the female ideal: 'there is no reason why women should not have a powerful physique.' The authors, both research scientists, have combed the journals, the media, and the annals for detailed information, which they present very readably indeed.

Eric Midwinter's little book, **Fair Game**, is a gem. W. G. Grace's biographer has strong opinions, often correct, sometimes heinous, and

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Edited by Harry Z. Evan

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there is no double talk: 'Aversion therapy works on the principle of people not enjoying the experience: sport is based on the notion of pleasure. Thus any attempt, psychologically, to use sport as a substitute for political tension or conflict is fundamentally misconceived.' Or, as a prelude to a social history of the pro: 'The first professionals of the modern era were servants, and, golf and tennis millionaires to the contrary, that element of servitude has not wholly vanished.'

Guinness American Football is a competent survey of what's what; the strength of this book, like all those in the Guinness canon, is that it gets quickly to the heart of the matter and never ever doubts that this is the best of all possible worlds. What this means is that one can have the facts and figures at one's fingertips, as one watches, and smugly make one's own insights into the metaphoric implications of one man using his body as a missile to get across another man's territory. □

MAGAZINES

Small worlds

Malcolm Imrie

'NONE OF THIS would have happened if a couple of writers had been shot in time', explained Khruschev, nine months after his soldiers had been forced to shoot several hundred readers instead, in Hungary 1956. An enduring hypothesis, in one form or another. Anger at the US raid on Tripoli? Inner-city riots? Without the *Nine O'Clock News*, without *Socialist Worker*, none of this would have happened. Khruschev's quoted in the October **Index on Censorship** (£1.40), which in spite of its title is considerably more than a monthly catalogue of worldwide repression, and always a good source of perspective.

This one contains an extract from Marquez's book about Chilean filmmaker Miguel Littín's return home to make a clandestine documentary, and six satires on life under Reagan's new customer by the publisher of the London Iranian paper *Asghar Agha*. It also includes a tirade by an ex-editor of the *Jewish Chronicle* against Noam Chomsky, whose critique of US media constuctions of Arab 'terrorism' was published in an earlier issue. What were these 'anti-Israeli' 'word-games' doing in *Index on Censorship*, he demands, seemingly oblivious to the irony of that rebuke, in this magazine. So many censors — in the Congo, for example, where they still take the Parisian *nouveaux philosophes* seriously enough to proscribe works by Phillippe Sollers and Bernard-Henri Lévy, along with *The Spy Who Loved Me.*

Back to the West and postmodernism, to 'a time of expanding culture, shrinking politics, ubiquitous Art and fading Life' as Meaghan Morris describes it in her characteristically perceptive essay in the Leftwright issue of the Australian journal **Intervention** (dist. Turnaround, £4.50). Her reflections on what's changed among radical intellectuals in ten years — faced with the view of political commitment as 'bad style' on the one hand; the old left's 'blackmail to Urgency' on the other — seem just as illuminating on this side of the world. And the political inertia she attacks is hardly exclusive to Sydney's lumpenculturati, who at least have magazines like this one, designed with intelligence, written with style.

Elsewhere, Ken Wark investigates the knowledge industry, and quotes Régis Debray: 'the left succeeded in some European countries in battering down the doors of the traditional knowledge apparatus, only to have the doors shut behind them and lock them firmly inside . . . the left has established toeholds in those institutions at precisely the same time as those institutions have lost their toehold in public political discourse.'

Wark applies that specifically to our own *New Left Review*/Verso elite, but more extreme examples can be found here, such as **Theory, Culture and Society** (in that order; Vol 2, No 3, £4.50). Yet another package on modernity/postmodernity its diverse contributors range from Alex Callinicos, who presents the miners' strike as a final refutation of Lyotard or Deleuze, to Arthur Kroker, who claims Baudrillard as the last and best of the marxists. The question which its 21 associate editors might now consider is for whom they are writing, or what connections these texts can make squeezed as they are into A5 format and phone-book typeface, enclosed in vast and near-interchangeable bibliographies. The circulation of ideas has long taken other routes, other forms, yet these journals continue, blithely self-referential.

New Left Review itself (£2.50) also retains a sense of closure, signalled as much as anything by those quaintly omniscient introductions to each issue, like the voice of some leftist World Service; or suggested by a friend's astonishment on seeing in the last issue that the Greek St boys had actually got a woman to write about the Greek women's movement.

Nonetheless, *NLR* is one of the very few British magazines still striving to extend marxist analysis, to deepen opposition. Its continuing debates on new social movements, class composition, electoral strategy or the Greens have been much more than repetitions of (neo) Trotskyist orthodoxy. And I was surprised by the range of subjects recently: Benedict Anderson's witty hatchet-job on James Fenton's posturing travel writing (in the last issue), or Diane Turner's insights into the sexual harassment she witnessed in her work as a cleaner (in the new one). In the last issue, too, Michael Rustin summarises Labour's current strategy as 'aggressive moderation in policy, ostentatious repudiation of the hard left and out-Saatchiing the Tories in the media.' In the corresponding intellectual climate, where marketing has swamped political imagination, *NLR* is a valuable exception.

Emergency (No 4, £2) would be another, though unless hundreds of you buy this issue, it will be the last. Born in 1983 out of fragments of Big Flame, some over-enthusiasm for Italy '77 and a dose of post-industrial politics *à la* André Gorz, the magazine took its title from a pun on 'emergence' (of god knows what new social subject) and state of emergency. Now the valedictory editorial places it somewhere between 'moribund' productivist socialism and 'inchoate' radical ecology. What's emerged over three years is more and more diversity, so that this last issue reads like

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an inspiring sampler of marginal voices, like the raw material of political alternatives. A magazine which can juxtapose Dick Hebdige's distraught journey through postmodernism, Kate Pullinger's shrewd short stories, Keith Piper's pictures, anti-nuke campaigner Rosalie Bertell and black poet June Jordan, doesn't deserve to disappear.

From the marginal to the right-off-the-page, *le monde fantastique* of die-hard situationists, Lettrists and surrealists who live in numbered boxes and whose only outlet is a small shelf in Compendium bookshop's basement. In the beginning were some of this century's most intransigently intelligent movements; in the end . . . there's **Vagit-Prop** (95p), a dire translation of Annie Le Brun's article attacking French TV's adaptation of de Beauvoir's *Second Sex*. This timely intervention was accomplished on 30 June 1986 by Lucy Forsyth and Michel Prigent, who'd surely have been better off going for a good *dérive* in the fresh air.

Which makes two reviews more than they deserve, since Amanda Sebestyen amusingly trashed the pamphlet in the last issue of **Split** (70p), offshoot of *IT* in its latest incarnation. *Split*'s now in its fourth issue, with efficient distribution (unlike *IT*, which may have died again for all I know), and eco-feminist-libertarian contents, strong on international material. The November issue has a massive and moving poem, 'Whale Nation' by Heathcote Williams, and an account of an experiment with the new drug Ecstasy/XTC. This seemed merely embarrassing till I read it carefully. 'Coming on wide and strong now. No sudden insights or premature rushes . . . don't feel like arguing about anything . . . what this planet needs now is not brilliant ideas and solutions.' Ecstasy is a *designer* drug. Now you know what they've been putting in the water.

FANTASY

Twilight zones

Colin Greenland

WE ALL KNOW where Narnia is. It's behind the wardrobe. Wonderland is down a rabbit hole and you get to Elidor through a derelict church in a Manchester backstreet. The gate to the otherworld is in an unregarded corner of this one, an unremarkable space which is contained but, because nobody ever goes to look there, might itself contain anything.

It's a surprise, then, when Paul Schafer and Jennifer Lowell find a passage to Fionavar in the largest room of the Art Gallery of Ontario, among the Henry Moores. Guy Gavriel Kay, author of **The Wandering Fire** (Allen & Unwin, £10.95), is from Canada, so this may be a piece of rather stagey civic PR; but he's also illustrating the point that magic otherworlds where young people go to meet their destinies are actually secret regions of the self. The gate to Fionavar may be found anywhere, because it's within the finder.

Fionavar, as the Image said in *The Summer Tree*, book one of this trilogy, is 'the prime creation, which all the others imperfectly reflect'. Kay employs myths — Odin; Owein and the Seven Sleepers; Arthur Pendragon and Guinevere — not to provide prefabricated sections of plot but incarnate elemental forces. In Fionavar myths can bruise, impregnate, kill.

Otherworld expeditions written as moral and spiritual assault courses are more satisfying than ones that turn into magic camping holidays. To ask for real events in an imaginary place is not perverse; in fact it's intrinsic to the form. The first three classics reprinted in Allison & Busby's Fantastic Fiction Library (£3.95 each) show as much. David Lindsay's **A Voyage to Arcturus** (1920), George MacDonald's **Lilith** (1895) and M. P. Shiel's **The Purple Cloud** (1901) each relate the arduous, formative odyssey of a worldly young man through violent, phantasmal landscapes. The contrivance of his transit is a device of estrangement, and a frank, even defensive declaration of fictionality. MacDonald's pointedly named Mr Vane pursues a peculiar intruder, half bird, half librarian, through a mirror in an unexplored part of his own attic into a world of squabbling skeletons and moralising lamias. 'Had I wandered,' he muses, 'into a region where both the material and psychical relations of our world had ceased to hold?' Yet home at last, after visiting heaven with a band of infants mounted on elephants, he concludes that the everyday is the illusion and longs to wake again into the celestial dream. Lindsay's Arcturus is an even more dangerous and arbitrary realm reached by a crystal torpedo fuelled from a bottle of 'Arcturian Back Rays'. There the dauntless Maskull is buffeted towards enlightenment by philosophical grotesques.

The Purple Cloud is the pick of this set, a masterpiece of high lugubriousness. Adam Jeffson, the last man alive after everyone is poisoned by volcanic gas, roams distractedly through the dead cities, crashing steam engines and blowing things up. The catastrophe is in some sense cosmic retribution for Jeffson's having set foot in the forbidden zone of the North Pole, as the only survivor of a deranged and murderous expedition for which he was selected at all only because his pushy fiancée poisoned an inconvenient nephew. Told in great serpentine sentences a page long and more, in gloriously over-upholstered prose, this really is an astonishing and extraordinary book.

Shiel leaves no doubt that his ruined world is just as illusory as Arcturus. Jeffson's memoranda are presented as a book written by an unknown author, read over his shoulder by the time travelling spirit of a hypnotised woman, taken down in shorthand by her hypnotist and transcribed for us by the unnamed inheritor of the hypnotist's notebooks. This compulsive complication of the transmission of the text, labyrinthine enough for the most scrupulous metafictionalist, is to make it, overtly and quite literally, far-fetched. For Shiel it's not just a question of how to get his hero across to the dominion of the Purple Cloud, but of how the story gets back here.

Gene Wolfe, whose towering tetralogy *The Book of the New Sun* was narrated by a man of the future claiming total and perfect recall, now brings us the first volume of a journal by a man of the past who has lost his short-term memory. Latro is a mercenary with a head wound, making an erratic pilgrimage through Greece in 479 BC. Every day he has to read his scroll to find out who he is, then write down everything that happens before he forgets it. Many of the things that happen involve people no one else can see, but we and Latro can recognise, intermittently, as gods and ghosts. What does happen, what Latro understands of it, and what he manages to tell us, are sometimes crucially and poignantly at variance. It is up to us to construct his history from the fragments we are given. Wolfe is an urbane master of the consummate conundrum. **Soldier of the Mist** (Gollancz, £10.95) will be irresistible to anyone to whom it is not exasperating, and exasperating to anyone whose memory all too often resembles Latro's, such as me.

For us there is Barbara Hambly. Barbara Hambly you can read on trains. **The Ladies of Mandrigyn** (Unwin, £2.95) is a similarly Hellenic story of mercenaries and mutually hostile city-states, culminating in a horrific battle with an inhuman magician. Hambly, a historian and martial artist, thinks hard about her imaginary political system and the place and the experience of the dedicated fighter in it. Her plot is complex and full, her observations earnest and intelligent. You wouldn't think it to look at the cover.

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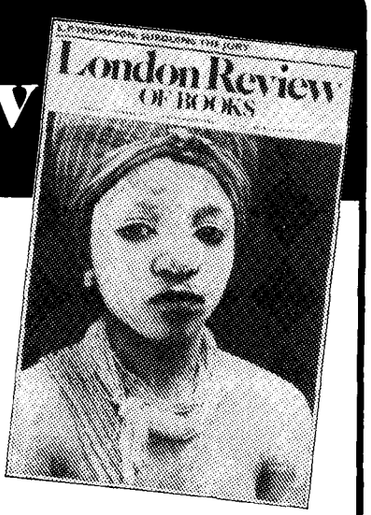

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ARTS

CINEMA

Soundtracks

Judith Williamson

Round Midnight (15)
Lumiere, Screen on the Hill, Gate Notting Hill
Crossover Dreams
ICA Cinema

MUSIC MOVIES might not be the first place you would expect to find morality tales. However, in different ways both this week's music releases focus less on music itself than on the moral life of musicians. This is seen as enabling **Round Midnight** to '*transcend* the confines of a music film' (Derek Malcolm, London Film Festival programme), while **Crossover Dreams** is precisely *about* the prostitution of a music form through the mechanisms of mass media. On a more fundamental level both films hinge on a colonial relationship: *Round Midnight* conceals this beneath its theme of 'personal dignity'; *Crossover Dreams* makes it explicit. Despite their diametrically opposed conclusions, the moralism of both films grates, being in the one highly insidious, in the other a bit crude.

Round Midnight was this year's hit at Venice, with the press convinced that its failure to win a prize was an injustice on the scale of an international conspiracy. But, elegant as the film is, its story is insultingly simplistic. Dexter Gordon — himself a great saxophonist — plays Dale Turner, a veteran jazz musician (amalgam of Bud Powell and Lester Young) starring at the Blue Note in Fifties Paris and, for the first section of the film, sinking deeper and deeper into alcoholism, addiction and degradation. The middle-aged black man is saved by a young white Frenchman, Francis Borier (François Cluzet), whose admiration for true art makes him dedicate himself to rehabilitating the musician. Dale Turner's recovery, once lifted from his black Parisian milieu, is remarkable. Repeatedly, Turner gets blitzed, ending up in police stations and hospitals; repeatedly, Borier bails him out like a baby, until he straightens out and starts composing again.

You may wonder what the white man gets from his burden: which is close to asking what the audience gets from the film. The black artist is shown simultaneously as a great 'genius' and as hopelessly weak — opening the way for his appropriation by our on-screen representative Borier: a colonisation which allows the music to seem as much the product of white European, as of Black American, culture. Indeed, towards the end of the film the renovated Turner hankers (unsurprisingly) to return to his family and friends in New York, and there the two of them go (to be greeted by a wonderfully sleazy Martin Scorsese as Turner's manager). All too soon the evils of the black community are apparent — Turner's young keeper has to fend off black drug pushers — and it's evident that Turner will degenerate again under the influences of his own people. In case the point isn't quite clear, the minute Borier goes back to Paris, Turner dies.

I am stressing the offensiveness of the 'white man's burden' theme because the movie has been so highly acclaimed by mainstream critics with no mention at all of this at best naive, at worst patronising and racist structure. *Round Midnight* has been hailed on all sides as wonderfully 'human' (usually a danger signal): Derek Malcolm writes that the 'warmth and affection of the movie is (sic) its greatest asset'; but no one has cared to ask why a predominantly white art-house audience should *find* this particular scenario so warm and affectionate. The idea that a young white designer (and, charmingly, single parent with a cute pre-teen daughter) can save the out-of-control black artist and thereby indirectly 'give' the world great music certainly makes us all feel warm and cosy. Add to this the film's exquisite photography and fine layering of narrative — using in part the home movie reels that are Borier's (and our) souvenir of the man he saved — and you have no doubt the most 'watchable' art film of the year. Add to this also a truly excellent soundtrack — arranged by Herbie Hancock — and you have the most listenable as well. But the film's lack of irony and failure to recognise the contradictions of its central relationship are, sadly, among the reasons for its success — especially in the context of the current jazz come-back on the mainly white club scene.

Equally topical, in terms of music fashion, is the Salsa film *Crossover Dreams*: a low-budget picture starring Ruben Blades — the excellent Salsa singer, composer and activist — as Rudy Veloz, a singer on the NY Salsa circuit who wants to 'cross over' into the mainstream pop world. While *Round Midnight* suggested that the *only* way for a non-white musician to survive was to cast off his own degraded culture for the cosmopolitan scene, *Crossover Dreams* shows how the aspiring Latin singer comes to his downfall by trying to escape his background and hit the big-time.

Politically, I have much more sympathy with this film: it is about a refusal to be colonised, just as *Round Midnight* provides a subtle justification of colonial relations. Yet its morality is so predictable as to make it less exciting than its music deserves. Much of the plot is carried through clichés: when Rudy signs up with an American record producer he suddenly starts having orgies in bubble baths with white girls, abandoning his nice Latina girlfriend who represents the integrity of his roots.

It seems unfair to compare *Crossover Dreams*' rather pedestrian *mise-en-scène* with Traunier's stylish design in *Round Midnight*, instead of being made with an eye to the art-house audience it comes over as a film with an urgent message to its own community. The slightly creaky narrative is

Culture colonialist François Cluzet with Herbie Hancock in *Round Midnight*

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bolstered with street shots of East Harlem and montage sequences of the Manhattan skyline: these, and the lingering shots of Brooklyn Bridge in *Round Midnight* are enough to hold my attention in themselves. But in the end, both films make you want to go out and *hear* music — *without* the morals. □

Trailers

Vokani Black and Third World Film Circuit presents a touring season of films which 'reflect in different ways the complexities of the black experience'. On Thursday 27 November *The Colony* (Philip Donellan, 1964, Br) *I Be Done Was Is* (Debra Robinson, 1983, US), *Finye (The Wind)* (Soulymane Cisse, 1982, Mali) and *Clarence and Angel* (Robert Gardner, 1980, US) play at the Afro Caribbean Cultural Centre, 2 Clarence St, Wolverhampton. Further details on 0902 20109.

MUSIC

Driver and conductor

Andrew Clements

Jenufa
JANÁČEK *Covent Garden*

THE ARRIVAL OF Bernard Haitink as musical director may not cure all of the Royal Opera's accumulated ills, but it promises to set the company well on the road to recovery. Things in Bow Street have looked so shaky in the last few seasons there was a danger of expecting far too much of Haitink, who will after all only take musical charge, and not be given last say on the matters of artistic policy that have produced the main grievances in recent times. But he is unlikely to have accepted the post without assurances as to the extent of his artistic freedom; he is not, one imagines, a conductor who will be content to bury himself in the pit, oblivious to the productions unfolded on stage, nor one who will accept without careful scrutiny any rosters of unfamiliar singers that might be urged upon him.

So far Haitink's plans have been revealed piecemeal. Some of the benchmarks of his regime are established; there will a production of one new or nearly new opera each year, beginning with the British premiere of Sallinen's fascinating but flawed *The King Goes Forth to France* next April, and followed in successive seasons by Berio's *La vera storia* from 1982, and the premiere of Birtwistle's *Gawain and the Green Knight*. A new opera from Ligeti is also in the pipeline. A new *Ring* cycle will have to wait until the 1990s, after the Opera House has been partially rebuilt; meanwhile Haitink will conduct a refurbishment of Friedrich's staging in 1988.

His debut as musical director (or strictly musical director designate; he drops the qualification next season) set in motion another of his long-term projects, a cycle of the Janáček operas. **Jenufa** is the starting point; the longest established of the canon, and also the one with the most illustrious history at Covent Garden itself. The new production also marks the British opera debut of its director Yuri Lyubimov.

Janácek is not the most obvious composer to associate with Haitink. I've never heard him conduct any of the orchestral works in the concert hall, and the operas in particular have often been regarded as the province of Janácek specialists. But from Haitink's presentation of the score, one might think he had been conducting it for years. There are moments when passing details do not tell as immediately and comprehensively as they might, and when the rhythms are not pointed sharply. Otherwise, though, the performance is compelling and urgently dramatic. Had Haitink elected to use Janáček's original score rather than Kovarovic's revision, the effect might have been even more weighty and intense.

As it stands, Haitink's handling of the score, and its impeccable realisation by the Covent Garden orchestra, provide the base for Lyubimov to build a taut and cohesive set of raw-edged family relationships at the core of the drama. Whether or not one can accept all his glosses — winsome ballets to signal the changing of the seasons at the beginning of each act are the most questionable — he has extracted riveting performances from the four principals, with only a few qualifications.

Many of the stage images are as stark as the tragedy itself: the lighting is severe, expressionist; colour is kept to a minimum. The bucolic setting of the original is replaced by bare enclosures, with walls that rotate and flap wildly, façades that rear up or collapse to confine the protagonists. The sense of a brutal story set in almost cosy rurality is lost in the process, but the abstract images which replace it have real theatrical flair and precision.

Eva Randova's portrayal of the Kostelnica, the stepmother who procures Jenufa's downfall, is the dominating performance. She has the emotional and vocal range that Ashley Putnam's Jenufa only achieves in part; there is something just too soft-grained about her, which makes the exquisite moulding of her lyric moments insufficent compensation for the lack of steel in declamatory passages elsewhere. Philip Langridge's Laca is almost too refined, petulant rather than boorish; Neil Rosenhein's Steva is weak-chinned rather than ingratiating. But the shortcomings are minimised by the coherence and sureness of the acting; it's hard to remember the last time a new production at Covent Garden was distinguished by such a high standard of stagecraft in every department.

All previous performances of *Jenufa* at the Royal Opera have been sung in English. The new production uses Czech, with English surtitles projected onto a screen above the proscenium. The whole idea of surtitles has driven some of my most respected colleagues into apoplexy, but used properly they seem to me a positive aid to the comprehension of complex plots. The Covent Garden system still needs some refinement; the operator must ensure that crucial lines are not projected before the singer has delivered them, while ensembles with several layers of text still seem to present insurmountable problems. Haitink believes the house should evaluate the system just to find out if opera-goers like it; and if he manages to persuade Covent Garden that it must take account of its audience's preferences that in itself will be a major achievement. □

VIDEO

Slowly does it

Alex Graham

NAN HOOVER'S new show, *Barely an Instant* at Matt's Gallery in London, is a welcome return to this country of an accomplished video artist, one of a rare breed able to use a technological medium to expressive effect, the ideas never subordinate to the form. Hoover works in video, sound, photography and performance, in each with equal assurance.

The show at Matt's consists of a series of colour photographs mounted flush against the wall and framed with a black matte that allows the deep translucence of the colour to glow as though projections of light. These are simple images of folds and curves of paper trapped at a moment where the forms created by gradations of light and the intersections of surface suggest the curves of parts of the body or some mysterious landscape. A second series has close-up images of parts of flowers or root vegetables mounted with pristine precision on rectangular constructions, sometimes singly or in facing reflective pairs standing on plinths on the black gallery floor. On one black wall a video monitor is recessed into the wall itself, the screen framed in echo of the photographic images in the same room.

This video installation, 'Flora', is a silent, close-focus framing of a flower head, perhaps a lily, and intersecting leaf and stems. By an almost imperceptible adjustment of the camera focus and a parallel shift in the intensity of an unseen light source, the image of the flower head oscillates between abstraction and recognition and the limited focal depth moves gently through space rendering uncertain our perception of the reality the artist offers us. In another room a monitor shows four tapes: 'Returning to Fuji' and 'Desert' are brilliant shadow plays, once again using only paper constructions and light to elicit powerful associations of known or imagined landscapes. 'Halfsleep' and 'Eye Watching' use the artist's own face, close to, in further evocations which go beyond abstract landscapes into the interior landscape of dreams, fears and aspirations.

Here lies the key to her work. In whatever medium, Hoover is exploring the relationships of time, memory and association, playing with the processes of perception to delve deeper into the interior of her own and the viewer's physical and metaphysical make-up.

Born in New York in 1931 she has lived in Amsterdam for the past 16 years in a studio where everything she might need is within reach and where she works alone, in a manner closer to her earlier career as a painter: contemplation, trial and error and perfection. In this way she is in complete control of the destiny of her work and it is the control with which she uses video that is so remarkable. In most cases her tapes are completed in a continuous action, like a performance which may be rehearsed but which is executed in one critical take. In this way we become as communicants with her ideas: the technology does not act as a barrier, is never obstrusive, and her respect for the medium helps render it near invisible. Her work is a welcome relief from the

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predominant obsession with the aggressive fast edit in so much contemporary video. It is essentially a personal and reflective art.

The constancy of Hoover's approach over the years shows a single-minded courage as taste in the art world has moved far away from the rigours of late Minimalism (in which she has her roots) to the heady cocktail of the Postmodern free-for-all of today. Her resilience appears to have been rewarded with substantial international credits to her name, leading to an invitation to participate in the forthcoming Documenta in Kassel, one of the highest accolades available to an artist. There is no artist of an equivalent stature working in video in Britain today. □

Nan Hoover's Barely an Instant *is at Matt's Gallery, 10 Martello Street, London Fields, London E8 (01-249 3799/521 4913) until 23 November; thereafter, by appointment; and at Kettle's Yard Gallery, Castle Street, Cambridge (0223-352124) from 13 December-18 January.* Nan Hoover Performance *is at The Cambridge Darkroom, Gwydir Street, Cambridge on Tuesday 2 December at 7.30.*

ART

Terra fibreglass

John Spurling

Beyond Image: Boyle Family
Auguste Rodin: The Drawings and Sculpture
Hayward

THE BOYLE FAMILY'S paintings come in various sizes between 2 foot 4 inches square and 6 foot by 12 foot. They hang on the walls of the Hayward's upper gallery and don't look at all like paintings but like geometrically cut and lifted chunks of the earth's surface. However close you go to them, you can't believe that you're not looking at a broken black-and-white tiled path, a piece of mud rolled and churned by heavy tyres, part of a paved yard with a metal drain-cover, a crumbling segment of shale cliff, the kerb and gutter of a city street. Every detail is there, life-size and three-dimensional: the loose stones, small grit, dirt, matchsticks, fag-ends, a half-buried glove, the yellow no-parking line roughly splodged over cobbles and imprinted with tyre tracks.

Nevertheless, the catalogue describes them as 'painted fibreglass' and the fact that they are hung on walls, bounded by their straight edges, labelled, dated and carefully lit, transforms them from slices of reality into art-objects. They are the modern equivalent of Dutch still-lifes, or those legendary paintings by Zeuxis and Parrhasius, the first of whom deceived the birds into pecking at his painted grapes, while the second deceived the first into trying to pull open his painted curtain.

But the Boyles' work shouldn't be confused with the recent movement called 'Superrealism', which imitates not life but photography. One of the side effects of the Boyle Family's paintings is to put to rest for ever any idea that photography is realistic, for photography lacks the element of continuous time as well as the third dimension of space. The sense of time is an essential part of these paintings, both the time that has worked on the original surfaces up to the moment at which the artists chose to reproduce them and the time that it takes the viewer to discover what they contain and to relate it to his/her own previous experience of the ground underfoot.

In his afterword to the catalogue, David Thompson tells a story about these paintings' reception at an exhibition in Japan. Some of the viewers were spending as much as 20 minutes in front of a single work. The museum's director apologised to the artists: 'I'm afraid it may not be your art they admire. These people are peasants. They love the earth.' 'Love' may not have been the right word: a white-collar sentimentalisation. The prevailing emotion in my own close relationship as a cyclist with the surface of London is watchful suspicion; and the objectivity with which these paintings are made, while not precluding an undoubtedly aesthetic pleasure in their composition and workmanship, renders them capable of reflecting also the distaste and perhaps even disturbance one feels in the presence of something mucky, disregarded, more or less random and literally debased.

Of course, even the earth's surface has its hierarchy. A piece of rippled, untrodden sand from Camber beach in Sussex and a red sandstone cliff from a quarry in Scotland belong to beautiful nature, the broken tiled paths from Victorian London are poignant fragments of the human instinct for order and decorative decorum, but the muddy parking-ground for lorries and the street gutter have not hitherto had romantic associations.

After the Boyles, no doubt they will; and this is really the answer to the old problem of reality and art. Every time an artist succeeds in capturing a new aspect of reality in art, that very success prevents the reality being seen in future as anything but art. The real thing — the pavement, the stones, the mud — even if it is exactly reproduced, turns into something separated out for perception and contemplation. It has taken on a new dimension, been endowed with an aesthetic purpose, a human subjectivity, a romanticism which it never had before. The importance of any new conquest of reality, such as the Boyles', is that it briefly restores the true value of art as a means of understanding, knowledge and relationship to life.

Downstairs at the Hayward is the sculptor who was once accused of doing a Boyle on the human figure, that's to say of casting it from life instead of modelling it himself. It was a clever idea to show Rodin at the same time as the Boyles and the exhibition is an exemplary one, carefully chosen, displayed and written up in the accompanying book by the organiser Catherine Lambert (Yale/Arts Council, £12.95), so as to give an almost studio view of Rodin as an artist still in the process of grappling with his reality through drawings and small models as well as finished bronzes. The trouble is that Rodin saw himself as a kind of sculptural Wagner, when he was really more of a Bizet or even an Offenbach. So long as he genuinely applied his art to reality — which for him was mainly an irresistible interest in the sexually available female and especially her genitals — he made strong stuff, a pliable, acrobatic/balletic mixture of male fantasy with female flesh; but his attempts at grandiose themes, whether abstract notions such as 'Meditation' or 'The Thinker' or monuments to the giants of French literature like Hugo or Balzac, are simply ludicrous. These writhings and campings, postures and posturings owe little to reality and almost everything to academic, melodramatic distortions of the Greek and Renaissance masters he mistakenly imagined he could emulate. □

TELEVISION

With knobs on

Hugo Williams

THERE'S TELEVISION and then there is **The Singing Detective** (BBC1). I'll fail to review that masterpiece further on. One other thing wasn't television this week: the first half of the Honeywell computer commercial, a working-model caricature of the bad old days of ink and muddle before user-friendliness made everything Honeywell in the world. It was made by the Quay brothers, identical twins from America and animation stars since their joint conquest of the Royal College in the late Sixties. It doesn't make you buy computers but, my God, it cheers you up after the disgusting boasting by a bulimic 'international' know as 'Allied Lyons', whatever that may be, about all the money they've got (£900m.). Some people don't know when to keep quiet.

I was grateful to Peter Levi (*Spectator*) for extrapolating to the knobs on a television set Melanie Klein's idea that children learn to tell good from bad from their mothers' having two breasts. Four moral choices, all bad, all the same, seemed about right for the modern world: in the bosom of the family a court is in session; the jury retire; they run screaming through the streets. Until you got a night like last Sunday when good overlapped good on all channels and you sat there with shiny eyes and nipple-shock, morally disarmed.

A background to the evening's quadrophenia was **The Trial of Lee Harvey Oswald** (C4), a massive, five-hour enterprise which it was only possible to imagine by keeping in mind the concept of delegation: 'Go away now and get many other people to organise . . .' Despite the programme's verdict, you'd have to be a Ronald Reagan or a Honeywell computer to believe that Oswald was in it alone, if at all, after all these years. This extended Perry Mason, complete with dying 'oomph' from Oswald (not heard before, I think) left a Conspiracy Theory well in the running. This was a three-ringer that just about hung onto your brain, if it did let your eyes slip away occasionally.

Clive James — forming OK sentences on **Did You See . . .?** (BBC2) faster than I could button-hop back and forth from the above, let alone **May We Borrow Your Husband** (ITV) or **The Two Ronnies** (BBC1) — asked valuably, while reviewing a Salvador Dali programme, how interesting the subconscious really was that couldn't look at a beautiful woman without seeing a raw steak. 'The triumph of the conscious mind, surely, is that it can look at a beautiful woman *without* seeing a steak.'

It was all-but impossible to look at Michael

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Gambon in **The Singing Detective** (BBC1) without thinking about a steak; without seeing one, even, unless you were a skin specialist: although James had thought Gambon's make-up inadequate — a mere gesture at the true horror of the disease from which Dennis Potter himself suffers — and Douglas Hurd had been churlish about the period routines engendered by the man's suffering, pain transformed into a kind of analgesic fantasy, seeing the grand design as mere scaffolding and the disease itself as a weak main character. But then, he had only seen the first instalment. By the second, a simple enough theme has established itself: original sin, guilt, whodunnit in the Garden of Eden. 'Clever Dick, make me sick. Clever Dick, give us a lick,' chant Gambon's classmates (Dick is Dick Tracy, of course) after he has just witnessed his first fuck in the undergrowth on a school outing. 'When I grow up,' he muses from the branches of his favourite (family) tree, 'I'm going to be a detective. I'm going to find out things. I'm going to find out who done it.' We shall not be all that surprised if he turns out to be illegitimate, his adored whistling and crooning father being 'not man enough' according to his red-headed mother.

You'll remember Dennis Potter's Depression masterpiece *Pennies From Heaven*, which made ironical use of escapist pop songs; this one uses a similar technique with even more variety and inspiration: pastiche ciné-noir, pastiche Forties musical, pastiche hospital drama, pastiche Hovis ad, you name it. Frederic Raphael may say greenly that it is small change left over from *Pennies*, the fact remains that *The Detective* has experience this time around, both personal and artistic, and it shows.

Our anti-hero is lying there in hospital covered with sores, arthritic, exuding obscenities and bile like John Osborne at his very best, refusing to take the statutory barbiturates unless he can take a hundred and back-flashing like a desperate man to delay not orgasm, as the rest of us may do (ladies excepted for once) but agony. It's so good your mouth's hanging open. You're like his night nurse at your own tellyside, refusing to leave the room in case he does one of those incredibly apposite hallucinations again: the senile old man he asks to call the nurse opening his mouth to sing Bing's 'It might as well be Spring', for instance, or the doctors doing 'Dem dry bones' in blackface. 'Where exactly do you think you are?' yells a furious sister after he has deliriously slagged off his ex. A shocked pause at visiting time. A 360° pan from his bedside. Can he pull it off yet again? Then: 'Cruising down the river,' he sings, 'on a Sunday afternoon . . .' It's enough to make you glad to be alive of a Sunday evening.

People have been half-hearted in praise of Dirk Bogarde's adaptation for himself of Graham Greene's short story **May We Borrow Your Husband** (ITV), but once you got used to the excessive use of close-ups, which extracted rather more visual response from the actors than the plot required or they had available, the story buttonholed you in its grand Riviera hotel lobby very effectively and told a timeless little bedtime tale of corruption and misplaced lust. Greene's idea, frowned on for the sake of decency by the Bogarde character, is that a bisexual orgy in a swimming pool without your wife is a fine cure for honeymoon nerves — and who would argue with that? □

WORK IN PROGRESS

Words across the chasm

Naseem Khan

'WHAT I DIDN'T like . . .' As Shirley struggled to explain, she started to shake slightly and the words got tangled. 'It was in the papers,' she said. 'Everyone saw it. They said we lived . . . in Screw-Loose-Land.' Her eyes filled with tears. *No*, it was explained to her (perhaps not for the first time), the paper hadn't coined that phrase; it had been quoting a piece in *Six Bullets*, the anthology of writing by patients at Fairfield Psychiatric Hospital. Shirley, a loquacious, generous woman of nearly 50, accepted the explanation immediately; the storm passed.

But the touchiness evinced by Shirley and her fellow patients at the Bedfordshire hospital at the way they're regarded by the outside world is not a passing state. It is a constant — and hardly to be wondered at. The divide between the mental hospital and the others — even when the hospital is not, as is Fairfield, a huge, grey, Victorian block set cautiously far away from habitation — is, even in these days of increasing community care, a deep one.

If *Six Bullets* does nothing else it will have quashed a few stereotypes that maintain that gulf. The work of 25 writers (including their tutors), it has a quality about it that needs no apologies or special pleading, with some pieces that startle with their honesty and sharpness of vision.

The Fairfield Writers Group began in March 1985 with a pilot five-week Writers in Residence scheme funded by Eastern Arts Association. When the scheme ended, the interest generated had been so intense that Bedfordshire's Special Adult Learning Programme (SALP) took on its support. One of the original tutors, David Morgan, stayed on for a year to develop the work. Although Morgan has since moved away, the weekly workshops (two hours writing and one hour discussion) continue strongly with volunteer Elsie Jakins. Several writers moved either to other hospitals or out in to the community, but a core remains.

Four of the initial group were waiting in Fairfield's little library when I arrived. It was launch day for *Six Bullets* and local television was expected. There was Shirley Austin, in various hospitals since childhood, and Allen Ealing, a mere three years or so at Fairfield ('a man on the road', he'd been, revealed Elsie Jakins). Opposite, Kathy Miller (author of a light-textured piece, 'Fairies' — yes, she said, she remembered them well) sat silent but smiling faintly. A long-stay patient of over 30 years, she was next to Tom McCabe, a Fairfield inmate on and off for 20 years, though now living out and doing well, he said, among 'very decent people'.

They are not nervous about the television; it's no longer a new experience. Huge as the claim might seem, the writers' workshop has succeeded in changing lives. Five weeks after it began, the writers read their work in public to an audience of more than a hundred, with, said David Morgan, 'remarkable courage'. Channel 4 made a short documentary about them earlier this year. And now comes the book, the first to emerge from such a residency.

It's not only the confidence to deal with the outside world that has changed, says Ms Jakins. When the group began, there was very little talk. Now there's criticism, argument and discussion of each other's work. 'You learn from your mistakes,' said Shirley, who used to be on a locked ward. 'It's helped me enormously,' proferred Allen. 'I'd always written on my own but I find it much more stimulating to write in the company of others. And I appreciated David and Elsie's criticisms.'

These were not stringent enough, though, for Tom McCabe, a tall, bony-featured, lively Irishman. Now retired, he's one of the few who writes between classes and writes copiously. 'It's mostly religious; I seem to be drawn to religious themes. Anything else I think a waste of time.' Morgan had been a bit too easy-going for his taste. 'He very rarely criticised. He said, "That's good. That's good. That's good" all the time. I like a bit of constructive criticism. No matter how old we are, we're still learning.'

When David Morgan, brought back specially for the launch, turned up he was greeted lovingly. Shirley hugged him and wouldn't let go. 'You're looking very smart,' he told Allen over Shirley's shoulder. Allen, spry and dapper in unreal pressed suit, shirt and tie, sparkled back. It was an emotional reunion. 'He can't talk for laughing,' announced Kathy loudly to herself. 'He talks so quickly you can't hear what he's up to.' She also was smiling.

'That's the main thing of this group,' offered Morgan, detached from Shirley's love. 'People are unwilling to hurt each other. We became a cohesive group where people could talk about what they felt. And that's what writing is about — about communication.'

What *Six Bullets* communicates could surprise the outside world: not bars and bleakness and unhappiness, though there is some of that, but a far greater complexity. All four felt, for instance, that the earlier Channel 4 film had overstressed the bleakness — easy to do when faced with the grisly realities of Fairfield's bricks and mortar for the first time. The book itself reveals more: it reveals humour, magic, surrealism, a few glancing comments on the world outside Fairfield's walls; even the mundane pieces have an air of achievement.

'Actually you get some people talking incoherent rubbish here,' said McCabe, 'really, talking absolute crap. But give them a pen and paper and tell them to write and they come up with brilliant things, absolutely amazing things . . . It's very humbling. I think myself it's the holy spirit working through them.' □

Next week: Work in Progress samples the theatre awards

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Ideology of soap

Marek Kohn, London W9
Your 'Archers' leader (*NS* 7 Nov) failed to appreciate the ideological tensions in the veteran soap that have been brought to the boil since producer Bill Smethurst moved over to *Crossroads*. His replacement Liz Rigbey has performed the unthinkable and made *The Archers* exciting. There is no going back. The local policeman Dave Barry abuses his powers as, twisted by macho envy, he harasses the long-suffering but cheerful publican Sid Perks. The token SDP supporter, Mark Hebden, has been revealed as an avaricious upstart whose ambition leads him to burrow into his father-in-law's business records. Feminist Pat Archer is outraging the village by using a script written by her women's workshop for the village's Christmas pantomime production of 'Cinderella'; a scandal which far surpasses her offering of works by Lenin, Lacan and Althusser for sale at the village fete.

Yet no clear tendency emerges from these strange phenomena. The old country establishment still defends blood sports and the Young Conservatives remain a vital social agency. The crucial development in Ambridge is growing urban hegemony. The scene shifts from The Bull to Nelson Gabriel's wine bar in Borchester, and the role of sage commentary falls more and more to Nelson as the formerly affable bucolic Tom Forrest becomes increasingly irascible and marginal. Gabriel is indeed politically conservative, but not unproblematically so. What are we to make of an authoritative, sympathetic character with a history of shady activity who wanted Shula to fetch a package back for him from a contract in Hong Kong? Such contradictions demand our attention. Isn't this what left realignment is all about?

D. R. Bartlett, Nottingham
Parody is only successful if it is based on accurate observation of what is parodied, and your writer has made some very inaccurate statements about the content of *The Archers*: Phil Archer is not generally portrayed complaining about how much he pays Jethro — though his son, David, has been known to; Jethro *is* a member of the (unspecified) union; Mike Tucker is not the only trade unionist; Jethro does not call Phil Archer 'Master Phil' — he calls him 'Boss'; Neil Carter (who was the union representative in Ambridge) did not leave Brookfield to start a chicken farm, but to run a pig farm; the Grundys, being tenant farmers who have inherited their farm, would not care to be called 'working class' — they are less so than Phil Archer's uncle and brother-in-law, who are gamekeepers; Walter Gabriel, whose ancestry goes back further than anyone else's in Ambridge, would not consider himself to be a member of the 'lower classes', while his 'petty capitalist' son Nelson is the member of the cast most associated with crime.

Demoralised SDLP

Rupert Keenlyside, Yarnton, Oxford
Fionnuala O Connor's Belfast Diary (*NS* 21 Nov.) drives home the extent to which Catholics in Northern Ireland have been disfranchised. Even the SDLP leadership are revealed as having no role: no more than five SDLP members are regularly consulted by the Dublin Department of Foreign Affairs — for information. Nothing there for the 137,012 who voted SDLP in the 1983 general election. Meanwhile the Official Unionist Party, according to Robert McCartney, one of its leading members, should be sacrificed so as to permit the people of Northern Ireland to become Tories, Socialists, Liberals or Social Democrats.

Is the hollow and unrepresentative monopoly of constitutional nationalism held by the demoralised SDLP worth defending at the expense of the disfranchisement of the whole population of Northern Ireland? It is high time that they were permitted to express all their interests — constitutional, moral, social, economic or whatever — within the ranks of the British parties of government.

Storm over Brent

Cllr Pete Smith, Chair, Education Committee, London Borough of Hounslow
Diane Abbott (Letters 14 Nov.) has missed the point over the Maureen McGoldrick affair. No socialist worthy of the name would deny that the educational system in this country has not well served the black and Asian communities in the past. It is certainly the case that the measures needed to confront racism and discrimination in schools and colleges are not always non-controversial and easy to implement without opposition. The question that socialists have to ask themselves, though, is whether the subjective desire to bring about equality of opportunity for all children regardless of racial or ethnic group justifies behaviour and attitudes which are in themselves unjustifiable.

The simple fact as far as I am concerned is that putting the onus of proof upon the accused person, assuming people guilty until proven innocent and levelling charges of racism against people with whom one disagrees on aspects of anti-racist policy, cannot be part of any proper strategy to fight racism. Apart from being wrong in principle such behaviour discredits the campaign against racism in education and puts barriers between elected members and teachers when we should be building bridges on this most important of issues.

The fact that Labour Party members can recognise that unworthy actions can discredit a worthy cause does not mean that we have been taken in by the propaganda of the yellow press.

Name and address supplied
I am a left-wing, white primary teacher who fully supports Brent's policies on anti-racism, anti-sexism and multi-cultural education. Indeed education in its real sense should have all these elements and I suggest these policies should be promoted in all areas, not just those where there happen to be black children.

Diane Abbott's letter seems to me to reveal some prejudice about white teachers many of whom care very deeply about the black children they teach. It is vitally important to employ as many teachers from ethnic minorities as possible — especially in the new Section 11 posts. However, Brent has been unable fully to staff their schools for about a year. I believe there are still approximately 150 teaching posts unfilled. In my own school our head frequently has to take a class when a teacher is away, to the disruption of his own duties and the organisation of the school. One class has been covered by a series of good supply teachers and three other teachers are leaving at Christmas. This is not a recipe for good educational practice.

Many Brent socialist teachers are deeply confused and alarmed by the 'McGoldrick' case. Yes, there has been media distortion. I and many others abhor the 'loony left anti-racist' theme. But Brent Council seem to have handled the case in an insensitive and inept way and have given the right-wing press a field day.

I look forward to the day when the education office *and* the schools are fully staffed. Then we can devote our energies where they belong — the improvement of educational standards in Brent schools.

Labour's policy on crime . . .

Christine Collette, PPC, Witney Labour Party, Leigh, Wilts.
Sarah Benton does a good job of taking us through the figures and theories on crime motivation and emphasises the importance of community involvement and concern in its prevention (*NS* 14 Nov.). Democratic participation, individuals functioning collectively, is what socialism is all about: to a socialist, law and order must spring from the self-discipline demanded by participation in a collectively run society; hence the importance of Labour's proposals.

Labour plans to achieve this involvement through strengthening the powers of the elected representatives on the police authorities and through creating community police councils, open to individuals and groups and representing all races and both genders at which police attendance will be mandatory but which the police will not control. The encouragement of the recruitment and promotion of more black and women police officers will help in the extension of democracy into a major sphere of society — the judiciary and police — which has traditionally been run by the upper classes and favoured the white, the wealthy and the male.

. . . and a solution?

Richard Kay, Director, Rainer Foundation, London SE1
The belief that young men 'grow out of crime' is stated as being based on the days of hope and full employment. Rainer, as a national charity with over 100 years experience of helping teenagers in trouble, has pioneered several projects as alternatives to prison for seriously persistent offenders; and it is our experience, even in these difficult times, that increasing a young person's understanding of his criminal history and the damage it causes others reduces re-offending. Our projects have had a significant effect on sentencing practices and, currently, magistrates in Basingstoke have not used custody for young people for 15 months recognising the success of our Woodlands project, and in Southend, where another of our

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projects is based, magistrates' use of custody has dropped by 70 per cent over 21 months.

Secondly, the article states that the multi-agency approach to crime prevention is unlikely to work. Commander Roach of the Metropolitan Police 'speaks angrily of the other agencies'. They have, he says, 'done zilch'. In all our Young Offender projects, we are involved in operating a multi-agency approach with Probation, Social Services, Police and magistrates working together with young offenders in their community. This follows recognition by all agencies that crime has wider social implications than the offender or offence in isolation and that 'Borstal', with a re-offending rate within 2 years up to 85 per cent, does not work as a deterrent.

Crime does need to be taken seriously and there are successful initiatives being taken within the community. But they do need recognition and funds to be able to continue and develop. And a more positive outlook on the part of responsible media would encourage just that.

Waldheim's role

Christopher Farley, London W1

Peter Kellner's report (*NS* 14 Nov.) on President Kurt Waldheim's 'first steps to atone for Austria's past' refers to discussion of 'practical steps that could now be taken to combat anti-semitism inside Austria, and to improve the country's image abroad.' One wonders which of these two objectives will win out. One of the obstacles to improving Austria's image abroad is the President's repeated denials of his precise Nazi role in World War II, followed by repeated admissions in the light of what his spokesman, Gerold Christian, calls 'additional research'.

An adequate response to war crimes is difficult enough to conceive, let alone win widespread support. It was a series of political compromises among the victors of World War II that determined which war criminals should be tried, what the punishment of each should be, which should be allowed to go free and which were of future use as scientists or industrialists to any of the victors.

In these circumstances it is highly unlikely that there will be widespread agreement about an adequate response to Waldheim's role. But it has been established beyond doubt that Lieutenant Waldheim was a member of the command staff of 29 men under General Friedrich von Stahl, the Nazi commander, at the brutal 1942 'pacification' operation in Kozera, Yugoslavia, undertaken by Hitler's army. He was singled out in German reports for meritorious service in that campaign. He received the King Zvonimir medal of the puppet Croatian government for 'heroic bravery in the battle against the insurgents in the spring and summer of 1942' and to the medal was added the oak leaf decoration, reserved for those who distinguished themselves 'under enemy fire'.

We may not be able to agree on an adequate response to such a role, but surely we can agree that anyone who repeatedly denies that role can not hope to continue to hold high civilian office with respect.

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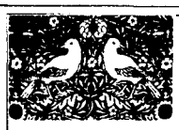

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TUES 2 DEC

SOCIALIST SOCIETY SEMINAR. 8 p.m. The Old Coffee House. Beak St, London W1. This week: Cora Caplan, author of *Sea Changes* (Verso) on 'Cultural Politics and Feminism'.

THE DIVISIONS OF RACE Ann Dummett, Director of the Runnymede Trust, and author of *'A portrait of English Racism'.* Chairman: Rt Revd Trevor Huddleston CR. 6.30-8 p.m. St James's Church, Piccadilly, W1.

WED 3 DEC

APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA, Racism in Britain: Youth Fight Back. In South Africa and Britain young people are fighting back against racism and oppression. Come to this meeting org. by Fight Racism! Fight Imperialism! to discuss the role of young people in the struggle. 6.30 at PCL, 115 New Cavendish St, W1.

SOCIAL FACTORS, HEALTH & HEALTH SERVICES, Professor Brian Jarman Dept of General Practice, St Mary's Hospital Paddington & **THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON FOOD,** Dr Tim Lang author of the report *'Tightening Belts'.* Chairman: Revd Peter W. Sutcliffe, Methodist Chairman London SE District & Chairman London Churches Group. 6.30-8 p.m. St James's Church, Piccadilly, W1.

FRI 5 DEC

LAUNCH OF APPEAL for Women in the Rural Areas of Nicaragua. Speakers: Audrey Wise, Hermione Harris; Videos, Cabaret, Disco, Food & Drink Available. Admission Free. Organised by the Women's Network, Nicaragua Solidarity Campaign. 7.30 at London Women's Centre, (Women's Only Venue). Wesley House, Wild Court (Off Kingsway), London WC1. Access. Details: NSC 01-608 0414.

SAT 6 DEC

SANCTIONS & SURVIVAL — A luta continua study conference. Organised by Mozambique Angola Committee. ULU, Malet St, WC1. 9.30 a.m.-5.30 p.m. £3.50, £2.00 unwaged.

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BACKCHAT

FIRST PERSON

Between the lines

Peter Kravitz

I CAN'T BE the only person who keeps boxes of second-hand books in the cupboard and bags of magazines under the bed. Every week I promise myself 'not until I exhaust all of these will I add to them', and every week I go back on my word.

A few Fridays ago I went with a friend to the first day of the annual sale of ex-stock books and records gathered from libraries in and around Glasgow, held at the Mitchell Library. On the way, we passed an old cinema which now houses The Cue Club.('If only all the dedication which packs that place during the day could be channelled into action for political change, then we'd have . . .'). Close by is the Koh-I-Nor, which is certainly the biggest Indian restaurant I've ever seen. Across the road, on six neo-classical floors and taking up an entire block, lies the Mitchell. It is without doubt the largest public library in Europe.

The sale opened to the public at two, after a preview for the disabled. We joined the queue at twenty past, as it started to rain, and before long it folded round three sides of the building. This *was* the early afternoon. What we all clearly had in common was the lack of orthodox full-time employment. A recent season of UB40 matinees at the Edinburgh Filmhouse, showing early Surrealist films, has had full houses of similar people, with others being turned away at the door.

There have always been library sales. However, since major cuts in public expenditure began ten years ago, books have been removed from the shelves not just to make space, but to raise money for new acquisitions. Inside, it was crowded, but only a few rummagers pushed excessively. Here I was, for the third year running, looking through more than a dozen tables of hardback fiction going for 10p each, and twice that number of non-fiction and reference starting from 40p. In a ritual similar to painting the Forth Road Bridge, for two days new crates are opened to fill the gaps left by books that have been sold.

We were scavenging over what a culture had thrown away and so deemed useless. Was swooping in on these bargains any different from buying shares in British Gas? The analogy worried me. But it's not like the sell-offs at all. Libraries continue to be owned and used by all people in common, and their persistence is evidence that if you trust people, they don't behave selfishly.

In a culture where life is increasingly stifling and access is always on someone else's terms, it may be wise to make for the cracks in the edifices. In the words of a recent Comedia title, we need to learn about 'organising round enthusiasms'. In 1983 a group of people published a book called *Nobody Nicked 'Em* about setting up a toy library in Bow. They came together for one reason, but there were equally important by-products like bringing homebound parents of under-fives out of isolation, while integrating neighbours from different cultures.

What's great about the Mitchell Library sale is that, for two days a year, people come together for no immediate purpose, with no agenda, no jockeying for position on committees, no possibility of being ticked off for departing from the subject at hand. This was face-to-face society, underneath the parapet of bureaucratic organisation and communication.

Seeing everyone carrying piles of fiction, books in Hindi and Urdu, biography, thrillers, children's books and romance, gave me a warm, chuckling feeling inside. There were three or four hundred people inside the Mitchell's Moir Hall, with more outside queuing in the wet. Unlike moviegoers, readers seldom get the chance to associate in a communal way. The feeling of people coming together spontaneously over a common project in a public space felt so good that I wish it were less infrequent.

I came away with a hardback Borges for 10p, two volumes of the *Dictionary of National Biography* covering the years 1931 to 1950 (more than 3,000 pages of unlikely stories) and a book of profiles of 'unorthodox socialists'. The latter had a piece on Eduard Bernstein, one of the many German exiles who found themselves in London during the last third of the 19th century. Bernstein was a friend of Engels and, with August Bebel, became an executor of his literary remains. He was sympathetic to some of William Morris's ideas, and subscribed to *The Commonweal* before leaving Zurich. In the British Museum he worked on the contributions of the Diggers, Levellers and Quakers to socialist thought.

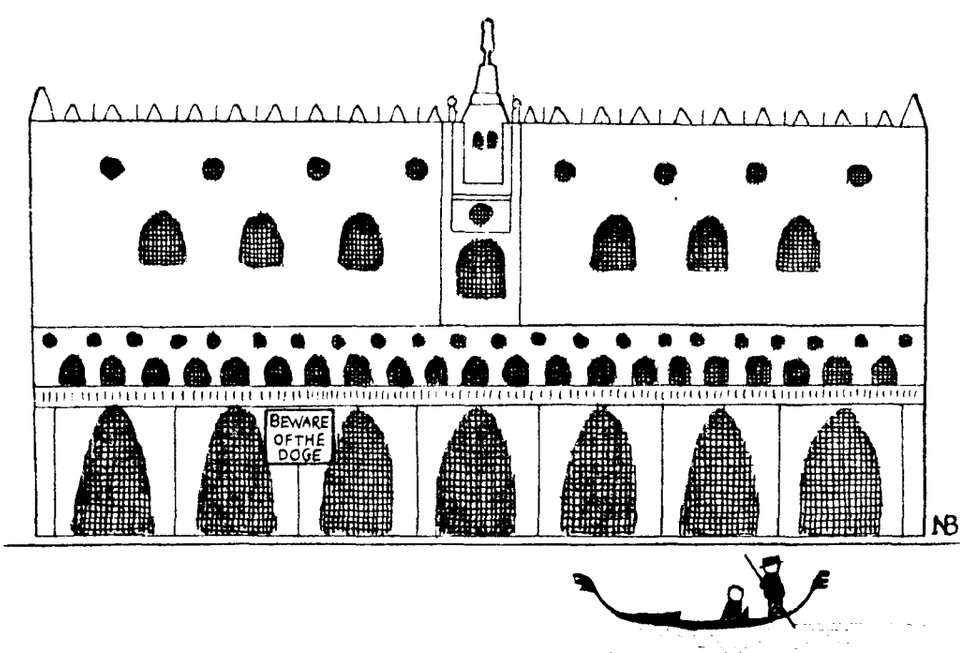
Unlike his companion Karl Kautsky, he did not see socialism as either inevitable (the current motto of a Fabian Society tie) or scientific. His aphorism 'the ultimate aim of socialism is nothing, but the movement is everything' is still quoted fondly by members of the Yugoslav *Praxis* group who also see Marx as writing in a European ethical-humanist tradition. Bernstein had a sceptical distrust of top-heavy or centralised organisation, preferring locally organised, small cooperative units.

One of his books has a chapter called 'A Socialist against Socialists'. You should, he says, take a critical stance, especially towards members of political parties who, while claiming to represent your best interests, are furthering their own careers. This belief in building from the bottom upwards was related to his vigilance on behalf of minorities in the face of growing utilitarianism. What he was wary of is exemplified by the utilitarian approach to art and education which runs through British socialism to this day. Such a current sees the ambiguity of art as embarrassing, and has trouble tolerating diversity and eclecticism — the sort of things which Bernstein wanted socialism to be strong enough to make radical and take on board from the sceptical, liberal and freethinking traditions which he saw as its antecedents.

* * * *

We went into a bar round the corner and the whole place was full of people taking books out of *Glasgow District Libraries* plastic bags. Some books were already being lent and exchanged. Where else do you get such a communal celebration of the written word? The crucial thing now is to bring displaced people together *outside of* places like pubs, where it costs money just to *be*. To move beyond snooker halls. The need is for public spaces to relax and talk in. Radio is free, but solitary. Imagine a network of John Peel listeners' groups, though. □

Peter Kravitz is editor of the quarterly Edinburgh Review. *He has lived in Glasgow for the past two years.*



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FOOD

Pure or purée

Colin Spencer

I AM CONSTANTLY amazed at how indiscriminate the public are in their choice of where and what they eat. I have recently visited for lunch three different restaurants in central London where you can eat reasonably. The quality of the actual food and service is widely divergent, going from downright bad, through uninspired mediocrity, to superlative. Yet all three were crammed full with happy, animated faces pleasurably gorging themselves.

Smiths in Covent Garden hypes itself in the tube-station lift as a pre-theatre supper experience where you can snack from a couple of starters with half a bottle of wine and have enough change out of a £20 note to tip the waiter. I visited it for lunch and the service veered from off-hand to imperious — not always the waiters' fault, as discourtesy from ill-paid staff is often an attempt to hide ignorance stemming from not being briefed thoroughly by the management. It is their responsibility to inform staff on how to sell the menu, whether ingredients are fresh, home-made, whether portions are large or small, and what is in the actual dish. If a customer has to wait while the waiter dives back into the kitchen to ask, it is a sign of inefficiency and lack of care.

At Smiths, I ordered a white onion and cucumber soup which tasted horribly of uncooked flour and little else. As a main course, I had rolled pancakes stuffed with red cabbage, broccoli and pine kernels. They arrived with the top turned black. I pointed this out to the waiter who ignored it. Choosing not to cause a fuss (I was a guest at this meal), I removed the charcoal crust and ate a little of the underside stuffing, which was, naturally, badly overcooked. When a different waiter came to clear the mostly uneaten dish away, I pointed out the blackened envelope of pancake and he said he would inform the chef. There were no apologies and the offending dish was not taken off the bill. The restaurant was packed and the staff busy, but such dilatory behaviour is inexcusable.

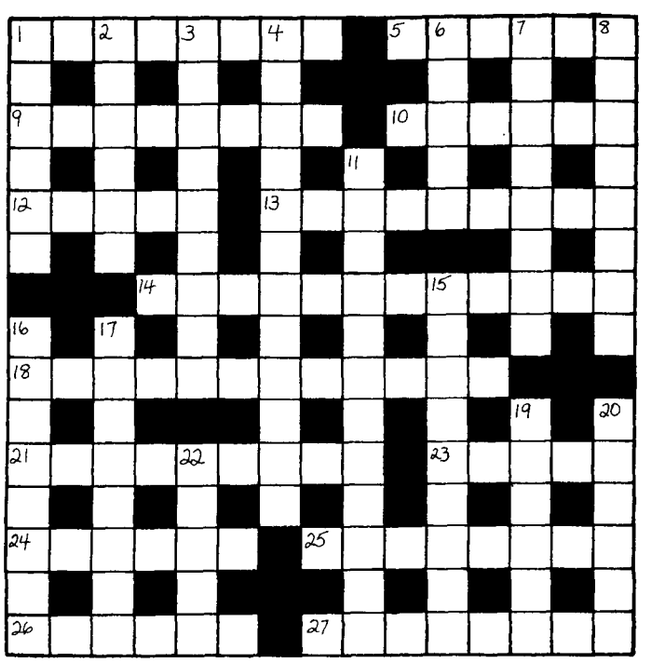
Brivati's Trattoria at the end of Farringdon Road in Clerkenwell is your run-of-the-mill Italian: there are countless restaurants like this in London and they do surprisingly well — due to nostalgia for Italian Riveria package tours, I imagine, rather than the quality of food. An Italian restaurant stands or falls on its pasta. If that is home-made, light and never floury, cooked *al dente* with sauces which are cautious in their use of the ubiquitous tomato purée, treasure the experience and keep it to yourself. Brivati's dumped large mounds of heavy pasta onto a plate which swam in a tin of undiluted purée topped with the driest Parmesan. They clawed back some reputation by grilling a Dover sole perfectly, but then over-garnished it with thick slices of lemon which are difficult to squeeze and parsley which appeared limp and soggy enough to have been adorning other plates that day.

The real find in London this autumn is **Christy's** in Wardour Street, recently opened by Keith Murray who, for many years, was the manager of Cranks. There, he was thwarted by the original owners in his ideas to create light and imaginative vegetarian food served on thin china. 'Why', he sensibly asks, 'are you always given vegetarian fare in pottery bowls and plates?' He has swung right away from the earnest, dour Cranks background, where crunching a nut salad gave you an ethical halo, and Christy's is filled with light, white marble tables, white chairs and potted palms. It echoes with a mixture of Syrie Maugham and Gayelord Hauser, but is as trendy as a punk bag lady, as stylish as a '67 MGC and as sustaining as a Provençal beanfeast.

Christy's makes no minimum charge, opens for breakfast at 8.00 and closes at 11.00 at night. In the morning, there is an English breakfast of scrambled eggs, toast, mushrooms, and grilled tomatoes for £1.95. Compare with the British Rail breakfast at £7.50 where the sausage is meat slurry and the bacon pumped with polyphosphates oozes watery slush into the pan. At Christy's, the food is imaginative and elegant, while being served in generous portions. A leek florentine as a starter was enough for two, made from large leeks which still kept their shape. The broccoli roulade with lentil filling and white sauce was an original recipe. It looked desirable and its three flavours combined on the palate in the most satisfying way. Keith Murray also stocks some splendid English wines, two from Nutbourne Manor — a Reichensteiner

Weekend Crossword 1540

PRIZE: £10 Book Token for the first correct solution opened. Entries to Crossword 1540, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU by first post 12 December.



Name_____

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ACROSS

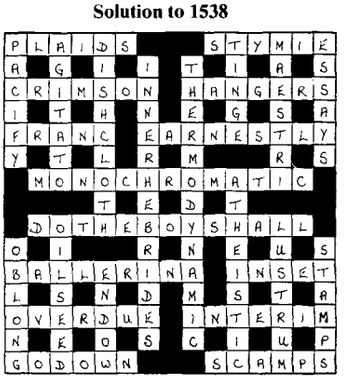
1. It is not smooth to retire before the beginning of the year (8)
5. Please become unconscious (6)
9. Drug which starts argument between archbishop and miners (8)
10. Severe test for gold distribution (6)
12. Ancient king presented by a woman in writing (5)
13. The plant lies entangled with weeds (9)
14. Means of communication for talking to the underground (12)
18. Reprimanding for wearing informal clothes? (8,4)
21. Vessel in which queen pursues soldier (9)
23. Behead a man with time to make a likeness (5)
24. In the vacation I anticipate learning some Greek (6)
25. Given without a front but considered an affront (8)
26. God gets sheep back through an ingenious device (6)
27. Surprisingly miss a ton — what a tragic thing! (8)

DOWN

1. Crazy males love this female (6)
2. Ammunition for canons (6)
3. Where there are hidden nets and traps (9)
4. Someone like Hitler has to employ torture among other possibilities (12)
6. Means of sucking up for an MP (5)
7. What perhaps is true about me in honourable retirement? (8)
8. Elegant woman in a hat seen beside a river (8)
11. Amazement shown when less civilized people enter gambling (12)
15. Awkwardness may make one's wages sink (9)
16. An animal holding a pint in taking over (8)
17. Calmly submissive, agree to an engagement in the grass (8)
19. Prevent a Scot being light-weight (6)
20. Finish up in an honourable place (6)
22. Conscious of when he saw a reasonable opportunity (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1538



Prizewinner to 1538

J. N. Munro
(Partick, Glasgow)

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1984 and a Penshurst Müller-Thurgau 1984 which are marvellously dry yet fruity. You can eat here excellently for as low as a couple of quid or you could have a gourmet dinner for under a tenner. Long may it reign and let every provincial city in the land have one.

Newcastle is a city which badly needs a good restaurant and could do with a vegetarian one. **Le Roussillon** slipped into the *Good Food Guide* in its first year and is now out again. I am not surprised; as a start to the Newcastle Literary Festival, this restaurant arranged an evening of my vegetarian recipes from a book of Mediterranean food. Thinking the GFG label was a clear mark of approval, I mistakenly left everything to the French chef, Jean-Pierre Embark. The evening was sold out and over 70 good Newcastle citizens turned up for a meal which did a gross disservice to vegetarianism and was a blasphemous rendition of my recipes. But it was then too late to do anything about it. One could only grin and swallow, though I tended to swallow the claret rather than the food. My apologies now to all those who were present at that evening and who were all game sports to stay the course. □

Smith's Restaurant, 33 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2 (01-379 0310).
Brivati's Trattoria, 10 Exmouth Market, London EC1 (01-837 4792).
Christy's Healthline, 122-126 Wardour Street, Soho, London W1 (01-434 4468).
Le Roussillon, 52-54 St Andrews Street, Newcastle (Newcastle 61134).

Weekend competition

No 2952 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

Publishers are now marketing new books just like any other commodity, and presumably it won't be long till they start trying to shift some of the slow-moving product on their back lists. Wanted: scripts for TV ads that will really *sell* authors like Proust, James, Dostoevsky, Gertrude Stein, Julia Kristeva, etc. 200 words maximum, please, by Wednesday 10 December. As an added incentive, we're offering a first prize of the brand-new and brilliant board-game 'Artificial Intelligence', the chess of the future (which sells for £19.50).

No 2949 **Set by Margaret Rogers**

Songs for the Rosebuds, our suggested name for the Labour Party Young Socialists (following the old Tory Primrose Buds).

Report **by Gray Dorn**

Oh, *very* droll. I suppose it's just coincidence that this week we get three times as many entries as usual, eh? Do you really imagine you can fool us into thinking this cheap cynicism is typical of *NS* readers? The fact is that the Trotskyists' chicanery and contempt for democracy has reached an all-time low: they've even faked the signatures of some of our most reliable contributors. I considered declaring the entries null and void, but perhaps it is better that our genuine readers actually *see* what they're up against. Thank you, George Moor, for a sincere and moving entry, which I've printed first: as for the rest, perhaps you'd prefer we sent your fivers direct to the Militant Fighting Fund?

Rosebuds in a happy spray,
We will chase the Blues away.
Rosebuds in a happy ring
Only light and sweetness bring.

On our petals no green-flies.
White and pure the peace-dove flies.
Little bees are making honey.
Everyone has lots of money.

Neil and Glenys hand in hand,
Smile upon the happy land,
Every home a lovely bower,
When the rosebuds come to flower.

GEORGE MOOR

To the tune of 'The Ovaltinies'

We are the Rosebud Teenies, Labour's girls and boys.
(Excuse us if we don't say persons:
No extremists we, that's certain).
We're all for fairy shairies, and equaliTEE;
We agitate with all our might,
But all the time we're most polite,
And never stay out late at night;
We're Labour's girls and boys.

We are the Rosebud Teenies, noted for our poise.
(We have no time for Derek Hatton,
And we're glad that he's been sat on).
We're really moderate, just like the Ess Dee *PEE*;
It's not at all a turn-around,
It's just that Mr Kinnock's found,
The voters like the middle ground;
We're Labour's girls and boys.

W. S. BROWNLIE

To the tune of 'This Old Man'

No more oiks, no more Trots,
No more reds with flares and spots.
Citroëns (deux chevaux) cluster round the door
Scaring off the nouveau poor.

Lots of wine, lots of cheese,
Start the meeting — minutes please,
(Put the gravlax by the plate of Brie)
Let's get down to policy.

We have changed, burned our boats;
Marxist views will lose us votes.
We have plans, the Tories to depose —
Hit them with a big, red nose!

No dissent, all agreed?
Let's shake hands on Kinnock's creed.
Did the Militant land us in this mess?
Hands up 'aye' votes — yes! yes! yes!

LISSA EVANS

Arise, ye rosebuds from your rosebeds,
Arise, you budding pink shock troops.
Remember that you're not like those reds
Who act as Trotskyism's dupes.
Your clothes should always be designer.
Your haircuts should be à la mode.
And you should think no group is finer
Than Red Wedge taking to the road.
Then away with all old-fashioned notions
Youthful rosebuds, arise, arise!
Apply your after-shaving lotions,
Advance, attack, deodorise.

BASIL RANSOME-DAVIES

To the tune of 'Wonderful Guy'

We are sure that the heart of the Party will start
At our loud demonstrations
For Kinnock and Co.

And they'll say that we're weeds for believing the deeds
And the new remonstrations
of Glenys's beau.

We're not ashamed to reveal
The way that we all kneel to Neil . . .

We're as clean as a fresh pad of paper,
Crisp as a handkerchief never near nose,
And you will spot we're a neat little lot —
We're in love with a Socialist Rose!

We're the left of the right of the centre,
Note how well-ordered in pictures we pose,
With us it agrees that our symbol's cerise —
We're in love, we're in love, we're in love, we're in love, we're in love with a Socialist Rose!

WILL BELLENGER

To the tune of 'He Who Would Valiant Be'

Ye who with hate have borne
The Tory menace,
Welcome to our new dawn;
The Age of Glenys.
We seek to pay no price
Of blood or sacrifice;
It's really *very nice*
To be a Rosebud.

On Cruise and SDI
And such great matters,
We are instructed by
Kinnock and Hatters.
No Trot or ILP
Shall ever splinter free
Our loyal tendency
To be a Rosebud.

NOEL PETTY

To the tune of 'Something Out of Nothing' from Eastenders

Close your eyes and listen to Neil Kinnock on the radio.
Ain't he come a long way since that Tracy Ullman video?

Now he's friendly with Paul Weller
But we still face one big snag;
Although Paul's a million-seller
We can't say the same of Billy Bragg.

We're gonna make something out of nothing.
We're gonna make a leader from a drip.
We're gonna make an old bore young and trendy.
We're gonna make a dog-nose red rose-hip.

We're gonna make something out of nothing.
We're gonna put our man in number Ten.
We're gonna make a Cabinet from rosewood
If we're old enough to vote by then.

DAVE WILLIAMS

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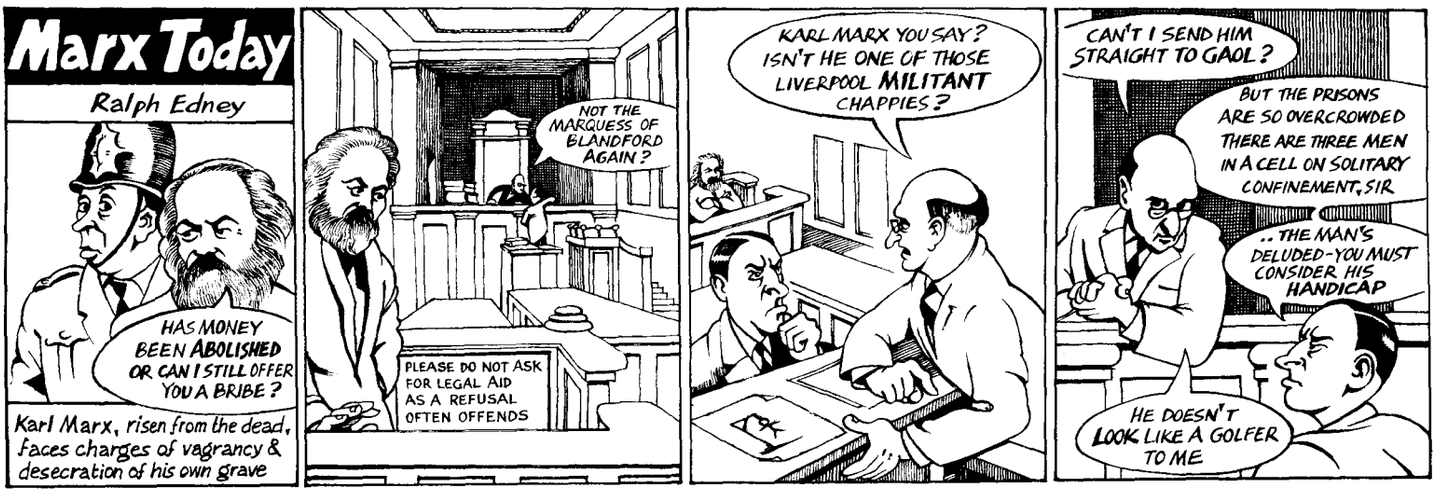

Marx Today
Ralph Edney
HAS MONEY BEEN ABOLISHED OR CAN I STILL OFFER YOU A BRIBE?
Karl Marx, risen from the dead, faces charges of vagrancy & desecration of his own grave
NOT THE MARQUESS OF BLANDFORD AGAIN?
PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR LEGAL AID AS A REFUSAL OFTEN OFFENDS
KARL MARX YOU SAY? ISN'T HE ONE OF THOSE LIVERPOOL MILITANT CHAPPIES?
CAN'T I SEND HIM STRAIGHT TO GAOL?
BUT THE PRISONS ARE SO OVERCROWDED THERE ARE THREE MEN IN A CELL ON SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, SIR
.. THE MAN'S DELUDED - YOU MUST CONSIDER HIS HANDICAP
HE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A GOLFER TO ME

Chess

Tilburg 1986

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. Beliavsky	x	x	1	1	½	1	0	½	1	½	½	½	0	½	½	1	**8½**
2. Ljubojevic	0	0	x	x	½	½	1	0	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	**8**
3. Karpov	½	0	½	½	x	x	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	**7½**
4. Miles	1	½	0	1	½	½	x	x	0	1	½	0	½	½	0	1	**7**
5. Timman	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	0	x	x	1	0	½	½	½	1	**7**
6. Portisch	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	1	0	1	x	x	½	½	½	1	**7**
7. Hübner	1	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	x	x	0	½	**6½**
8. Korchnoi	½	0	0	0	½	0	1	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	x	x	**4½**

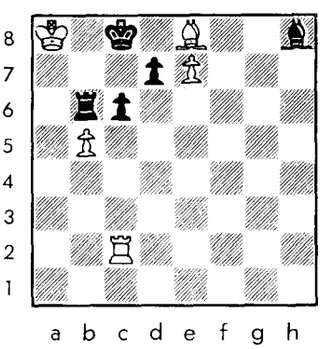
EACH YEAR the Dutch, thanks to sponsorship by Interpolis Insurance, stage a very grand tournament in Tilburg. This year it was a Category 15 double-rounder between eight of the best. Proud at the top was Alexander Beliavsky. His 8½/14 for first place may not seem like heavy scoring. But, having handicapped himself by starting with two losses, his 5 wins from the remaining 12 games was a tremendous strike-rate against Elo 2600+ opposition.

Former *NS* columnist Tony Miles made important contributions to the theory of a fashionable variation of the Queen's Indian Defence. The critical position arises after the moves:
1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. Nf3 b6 4. Nc3 Bb4 5. Bg5 Bb7 6. e3 h6 7. Bh4 g5 8. Bg3 Ne4 9. Qc2 d6 10. Bd3 Bxc3+ 11. bxc3 f5 12. d5! Nc5 13. h4 g4 14. Nd4 Qf6 15. 0-0

From here **Miles-Beliavsky** (Round 1) continued: **15 . . . Nxd3 16. Qxd3 e5 17. Nxf5 Bc8** All this had been played in the 6th game of the Kasparov-Timman match in Hilversum and Kasparov now sacrificed his Knight with 18. Nd4!? exd4 19. cxd4. My comment at the time (*NS* 17 January) was: 'Kasparov's attack crashed through and nobody is likely to relish defending that position again.' But since then the game Gligoric-Popovic from the 1986 Yugoslav Ch. has shown that Black can defend with 19 . . . 0-0! 20. f3 Qg7 21. Kh2 Nd7 22. e4 Nf6 23. f4 Nxe4! 24. Qxe4 Bf5 25. Qe3 Rfe8, when Black's Bishop is so much better than White's that Gligoric was happy to make a draw, in spite of being a pawn up. Presumably Beliavsky was intending to carry play along the lines of the Yugoslav game, but Miles gets his improvement in first by opening the f-file immediately. **18. f4! Qxf5 19. e4 Qh5 20. fxe5 dxe5 21. c5! Kd8** Stepping into the abyss, but 21 . . . bxc5 22. d6 c6 23. d7+ Bxd7 24. Qd6 is crushing. **22. d6 Qe8 23. dxc7+ Kxc7 24. Qd5 Nc6 25. Rd7+ Bd7 26. Raf1 Rd8 27. R1f6 Kc8 28. cxb6 axb6 29. Qb5 1-0.**

When Miles and Timman met for the second time in Round 9 the Dutch GM reverted to the line he had played in the 4th game of his match against the world champion: **15 . . . Nba6 16. Nxe6 Nxe6 17. Bxf5 Ng7 18. Bg6+ Kd7 19. f3 Raf8 20. fxg4 Qe7 21. e4 Kc8 22. Qd2 Nc5** He played 22 . . . Kb8 against Kasparov, but then 23. Qd4! is supposed to be strong for White. **23. Rxf8+ Rxf8 24. Qxh6 Qf6 25. Bf5+!** With 4 connected passed pawns for the piece White can be confident about his prospects in the endgame. **Nxf5 26. Qxf6 Rxf6 27. exf5 Ba6 28. Bf2 Bxc4 29. Bd4 Rf7 30. f6 Rh7** After this Black is definitely lost. 30 . . . Nd7 was a better try to stem the flood of White pawns, e.g. 31. g5 Bxd5 32. g6 Rf8 33. f7 Bxf7 34. gxf7 Rxf7 with chances of survival. **31. Bxc5 dxc5 32. Rd1!** Cutting off the Bishop's diagonal to f7 and g8. If now 32 . . . Be2 33. g5! **Bb5 33. g5 Be8 34. Re1 Kd7 35. g3 b5 36. Kg2** There is no defence against Kh3 followed by a methodical advance of the pawn-phalanx. **a5 37. Kh3 b4 38. cxb4 axb4 39. g4 Rh8 40. h5 Kd6 41. Rxe8! 1-0.**

Problem
White to play and win (Kasparian, 1961). The problem is how to defeat the counterplay Black gets with . . . Rb8+ and . . . Bd4+.



Solution
1. Bf7 Rb8+ Black has to check since 1 . . . Bd4 loses to 2. e8=Q+ Kc7 3. Rxc6+ dxc6 4. Qe7+ and mate next. **2. Ka7 Bd4+ 3. b6 Bxb6+** 3 . . . Rxb6 4. e8=Q+ Kc7 5. Ra2! and wins. **4. Ka6 Bd8!** Now what? If 5. e8=Q Ra8 is mate. **5. Rxc6+! dxc6 6. Be6+ Kc7 7. e8=Knight! mate.**

George Botterill

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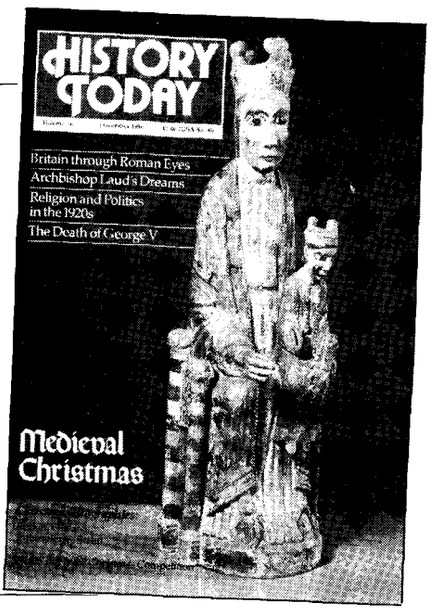

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